



THE Liguorian

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF GOOD READING

20 cents

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| What Will Happen When You Die | 641 |
| The Man Who Retired | 645 |
| Age Difference in Marriage | 650 |
| The Truth About Snakes | 651 |
| For Wives and Husbands Only | 654 |
| Willie Becomes a Father | 655 |
| Readers Retort | 661 |
| On Slyness | 664 |
| Unknown God | 665 |
| The Blessings of Purgatory | 670 |
| Zooming to Success | 671 |
| Deep Imprint | 674 |
| Incident in Heidelberg | 675 |
| Jonas and the Whale | 680 |
| The Gambler Who Won at Last | 681 |
| Thought for the Shut-in | 685 |
| Christ's Story-Telling Technique | 686 |
| Sideglances | 690 |
| Catholic Anecdotes | 690 |
| Pointed Paragraphs | 691 |
| Liguoriana | 698 |
| Book Lovers' Department | 700 |
| Lucid Intervals | 704 |

NOVEMBER, 1949

\$2.00 Per Year
\$2.25 in Canada

Vol. XXXVII
No. 11



Amongst Ourselves

Practically all periodicals and magazines offer their current subscribers an opportunity to give annual subscriptions to their friends as Christmas presents during November and December. This is a good thing, because a monthly package of reading matter spread over a whole year is a far better Christmas present than a hundred ephemeral items that we could name.

The gift of reading matter grows in value, however, according to the value it will have for the person receiving it. The essential purpose of friendship and love is helpfulness; it is not merely enjoyment or self-satisfaction; it certainly is not self-interest. Some periodicals may be given as Christmas presents that serve no purpose except enjoyment, even possibly a wrong and dangerous kind of enjoyment. Give a person a year's subscription to a magazine that fixes his attention solely on romantic love, the importance of money, the pleasure of eating, drinking, traveling, etc., and on enticing advertisements for material luxuries, and you will help to hold that person back from any betterment of his mind or soul. Or give a person a year's subscription to a magazine that is full of human interest, but without one single element of divine interest, and you will be raising a new barrier to his ever approaching the One on whom his happiness depends. It almost seems sacrilegious that some magazines are given as Christmas presents: their whole tenor and tone seems to say what the devils said to Christ in the Gospel: "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?"

The Liguorian, like other magazines,

urges its current readers to subscribe for friends at Christmas as a token of friendship and love. It could quote hundreds of letters from new readers, some of them added through gifts of former Christmases, stating that they have not only enjoyed it, but have been made better by it. Such letters outnumber not less than 20 to one the critical letters we publish under "Readers Retort." Its whole aim is to serve the essential purposes of friendship by helping others—our friendship for all our readers, and the friendship of readers for others like themselves.

Without door to door agents, without commercial advertising, without much margin of income that can be used for promotion, *The Liguorian* is dependent in large measure on the mouth-to-mouth promotion of its readers, and on their understanding of the truth that friendship means helpfulness to others. It is easily possible that the number of its readers can be doubled this Christmas, if only those whom it already helps will decide to let it be their most friendly gift to someone else. Readers may use the blanks on the inside rear cover of this issue for sending in Christmas gifts, or they may use the blanks we shall send them through the mail. It will be necessary to know how many copies of the December issue must be printed so that all for whom gifts are sent may receive that copy first. Therefore, do this bit of Christmas shopping early. The lead article in December will be a forceful boost to a genuine Christmas spirit under the heading "Counterfeiting Christmas."

The Liguorian

LIGUORI, MO.

Editor: D. F. MILLER, C.Ss.R.

Associate Editors:

M. J. Huber, C.Ss.R.

L. Miller, C.Ss.R.

E. Miller, C.Ss.R.

R. Miller, C.Ss.R.

T. E. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

D. Corrigan, C.Ss.R.

J. Schaefer, C.Ss.R.

R. T. McKee, C.Ss.R.

Circulation Manager: R. A. Gaydos, C.Ss.R.

Business Manager: A. J. Huber, C.Ss.R.

Two Dollars per year — (Canada and Foreign \$2.25)

Published Monthly by the Redemptorist Fathers and entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Liguori, Mo., under the act of March 3, 1879. — Acceptance for mailing at special rates of postage provided for in section 1103, act of October 3, 1917. Authorized July 17, 1918. Published with ecclesiastical approval.

THE
Liguorian
a magazine for the lovers of good reading



*Devoted to the Unchangeable Principles of Truth, Justice, Democracy
and Religion, and to All That Brings Happiness to Human Beings*

What Will Happen When You Die?

Every human being is fascinated by his own curious and wondering thoughts of what will happen to him at death and after he dies. Here is the picture insofar as words can paint it, based on the words of the only One who really knows.

D. F. Miller

EVENTS WILL take place very rapidly in the moment after you die. What those events will be has been argued by different men. Some say (reincarnationists) that your spirit will immediately be sent into another object on earth, a less worthy one, such as a locust or a horse, if you did not do a very good job as a human being; a more noble one, such as a genius or a great leader, if you did all right your first time out. Others (spiritualists) say that your spirit will retire to a sort of concentration camp, where you will mope around waiting for your loved ones to make contact with you through some kind of a seance. There are some who say that nothing will happen to you after you die, because you will be nothing; you will have become extinct, been annihilated, destroyed.

Only one person has lived who knew the exact and whole truth about what will happen to you after you die. He was Christ, the Son of God, and He has told you the truth. Here is a picture, drawn from the central facts He has made known to you, of how things

will go with you after you die.

No matter how you die, the moment of death will be marked by a sharp awakening of brilliant consciousness. You will know who you are, what you have been, what you were intended for, what you have done with your life. This sudden burst of fuller consciousness than you ever knew before may have been preceded by hours or even days of unconsciousness. Perhaps you will be very sick before you die; you will recognize nobody and have no awareness of yourself; you will appear to be merely a laboriously breathing human body. People around you, possibly, will not even be able to discern the exact moment of your death, so quietly will you slip away. But you will know the exact moment yourself. Never in your life was there so much light around you. Never did you see things so clearly and so sharply as you do now.

Or, you may die suddenly, in an accident or of a heart attack or in a furious struggle against drowning. You will be conscious right up to the minute or two before you die. But even in that

The Liguorian

case, your previous consciousness will seem like half-sleep in comparison with the sudden awareness of yourself and of other things that will come to you in the moment of your dying.

If you are old and tired and sleepy just before you die, you will suddenly feel, in the moment of death, like a young person with the fullest vigor of your faculties; indeed, with a power of thinking and willing that will be easier and more acute than you ever experienced in the full vigor of your youth.

One reason for this more perfect consciousness and mental activity after death is that your mind and will no longer will have to act through the sluggish instrumentality of your body. In life on earth, nothing can enter your mind except it approach through your bodily senses, your sense memory, your imagination. It takes time to think things out while living on earth because body and soul have to work together, and the body can often interfere with, instead of assisting, the process of thinking in the soul. At death, the body will no longer be required for thinking, and it will no longer be able to distract your mind or to cloud your vision. You will see things as they are—yourself, your companions, your deeds, your whole life, God.

With this new and brilliant consciousness of yourself and other things, you will now be subjected to an instantaneous judgment and sentence on the part of Jesus Christ, Who, according to Sacred Scripture and His own words, "has been appointed to be the judge of the living and the dead."

With your new ability to see things as they really are, and with some help from God, you will in a moment be shown your entire life. This review of your life will bear no comparison with that which some people have reported

as passing before their eyes when they seemed to be drowning, though at the last moment they were saved. This review will be not merely factual, but interpretive; that is, you will see the true value or the real evil of all that you did in life. You will not even think of making any of the foolish excuses for evil that passed so glibly from your lips in life, because now a foolish excuse will appear as that and nothing more; there will not be anybody but God and yourself concerned, and you will be fully and overwhelmingly aware of how His knowledge penetrates everything and brings into light every secret and long hidden motive of your soul.

But the important things that your mind will fix itself on in that instant of your judgment will be the last conscious decision you made about God before you died. It is true, you will wonder, now that you have a glimpse of God in the clear-thinking moment of your judgment, how you could have had any but one disposition toward God, that of love and longing to be with Him. But at the same time you will know how exceedingly important it was to love Him before you saw Him, when you knew Him only from His creation and His words.

So with a fixed intensity you behold your last conscious and deliberate decision about God. Perhaps that decision was made many years before you died. Made somewhat in this way: "I suppose there is a God. I suppose He made the world and me. I suppose I could learn something about Him and what He asks of me if I tried. But there are too many other interesting things in life. And there are burdens attached to thinking about God. If there is a God, I surely don't need Him, and I won't have him . . ." It is hard to set down with what anguish this decision will

be recalled in the moment when your soul will catch its first glimpse of God!

Or perhaps your last conscious decision about God was made in the form of a choice of sin, of something you knew was contrary to everything God loved and everything He ever said. You were married, but you wanted that young girl, so much more appealing than your wife. She seemed so agreeable to your advances, and it was so easy to arrange things so as to escape detection. But adultery closed God out of your life—you knew it—you knew it. You half-heartedly thought at times of giving it up; you still could choose God and give up the girl. But you didn't; the ties grew tighter; the sins grew even sweeter; you kept pushing God back—back—and that turned out to be your last conscious decision about God. You see it so clearly now; every new sin and new decision; every chance for repentance, reform, confession; every push you gave to God, sending Him out of your consciousness and away from the love you knew you owed to Him; then the last push—the last decision. And the irony of how little you got out of it, how fragile and momentary were the satisfactions of your adulteries, now that you look into the face of God!

Or perhaps your last decision about God was simply one in which you stated (to yourself and to others) that God was asking too much of you, and that what He offered in return for what He asked was not good enough for you. Your clear vision in this moment of judgment gives you a view of heaven and hell such as you could never have had on earth. But God had put those realities into words; you knew what the words meant. Now you not only know, but you see. And your excruciating agony is to know that the last will-act you made about God was to decide

that heaven was not worth the routine of Mass-going, Sacrament-receiving, fasting and abstaining, and law-keeping that His authority demanded, and that hell was not to be feared as a prospect. How you would like to escape consciousness now as your mind is fixed on that last decision, or even to go mad, insane, to escape the consequences of that decision. But that decision was your madness; now there is only clear, logical, inescapable thinking, in the light of the supreme wisdom and justice of God.

Perhaps, too, your last decision in life about God will now come before you as one of love. It was that good confession, on a Saturday night, in a church crowded with lounging penitents, and you thought while waiting of heaven and hell and the cross on which Christ died and of your desire for God's love. And you died shortly after that turning of your face entirely to God! That was your last decision, your latest choice about God: you loved Him—you loved Him—you loved Him—and you died loving Him thus. Everything that contributed to that last act of love comes before you, and a great outburst of gratitude wells up from your will for each word of prayer, each deed of sacrifice, each victory of virtue, that made possible your last act of love.

Thus, though it takes long to write of it and to read it, your judgment will be instantaneous, and your sentence will be part of it, and this will depend on the last decision you made concerning God before you died.

After the judgment, you will immediately go to the place you have chosen for yourself by that last decision concerning God.

If the last decision was against God, in favor of something you could have only by ignoring or rejecting God, your

place will be hell. You will go there immediately. It will be a terrible moment, but its terror will not be momentary but will stretch into eternity. Its agony will be intensified by the fact that you will know how easy it would have been to escape this fate. Strangely, too, where in life you had often said that if you went to hell you would have plenty of company there, now the company you find in hell only adds to your suffering. But the worst thing you will experience in hell will be the separation from God, now that you know, with the new, sharp, after-death clarity of vision, that you never needed, and never will need, anybody or anything but Him to make you happy. At the same time, that last decision you made in life against God will have crystallized into a permanent hatred of God, which you will not be able to escape even though you know how much you need Him.

If your last decision about God was one of love and perfect self-surrender to God's will, with no element of inclination to oppose Him remaining in your soul, your place will be heaven. You will be transported there immediately. Now, as you enter heaven, you will think of many of the scornful things that agnostics and pretending atheists said about it on earth. Your thought is swallowed up in supreme pity for them . . . This is like nothing that ever pleased you before . . . This is everything . . . This is what you

want . . . everything you want . . . this will be forever.

And if your last decision about God while you still lived on earth was a mixed decision, one in which you loved God and wanted God, but not quite enough to give up a little selfishness, a little peevishness, a little vanity, a little envy, then your place will be purgatory. You will go there immediately. You will know so clearly that the little moral sores must be healed, the little sins must be atoned for in suffering. Perhaps you will catch a glimpse of heaven on your way to the prison of purgatory, and then there will be a strange mixture within you of tormenting sadness that you cannot enter your "home" at once, and of deeply rooted joy that you have not lost it forever.

Thus will it happen to you when you die. And when, finally, God decrees the end of the world in which you had lived, your soul will come forth from wherever your life's last decision about God placed it, will be reunited with your body refashioned from the dust or mold or earth into which it decayed, and you, body and soul, will be judged and sentenced a second time. This time before the eyes of all mankind. This time to permit all the world to see that each man's judgment was just and right and good, indeed, that each man's judgment is only the expression in words of what he chose in life for his eternity.

Then to heaven or to hell—forever.

Not Bed Time

We heard recently about a youngster who was attending church for the first time. When Mass began, the people around her all promptly knelt down, and the little girl asked her mother the reason.

"Hush!" her mother whispered. "They're saying their prayers."

"What!" the little girl exclaimed, in a voice that could be heard within a radius of ten pews, "with all their clothes on?"

The Man Who Retired

This placid little story of a typical American who used the free enterprise of his great country to good advantage ends differently from similar stories in the "slicks". Look out!

L. G. Miller

AT PROMPTLY seven o'clock Mr. Robert Wheeler stirred uneasily in his bed. He had tossed and turned restlessly during most of the night, and only towards morning had fallen into a deep sleep. Now, still drugged with slumber, he felt a vague sense of urgency. A bell was clanging somewhere, and in that last moment between sleep and wakefulness, a host of confused impressions raced through his mind. It was the bell of a fire-engine he heard, and he himself was on the fire-engine, racing down the street. Suddenly a blank wall loomed up before him.

"Look out!" he cried sharply; and came to consciousness with a jerk of his whole body. The clanging bell was only the alarm on his clock, trilling away on the table beside his bed.

Mr. Wheeler reached over and shut it off. His wife was still sleeping soundly beside him, and as usual he felt a vague sense of annoyance over the fact that she could sleep so well, while he himself had for years been a victim of insomnia.

For a moment he sat up in bed, trying to fix his thoughts. There was something special he had to do today, something which had caused him to set his alarm for such an early hour. He wrinkled his brow, and then it came back to him with a rush. He was about to retire from business, that's what it was. Today would mark his final preparations. He wanted to get all the details ironed out before nightfall, because

tomorrow he and his wife planned to leave for Florida for an extended vacation. Their tickets on the Dixie Flyer were already purchased. The thought was a pleasant one—but today he must take care of the last details of his active business life. Then there would be not a cloud to mar his peace of mind.

Mr. Robert Wheeler was not an old man, in fact, he had only just passed his fiftieth birthday. But all his life he had been pointing towards this day. Not for him, this thing of working oneself right into the grave. Mr. Wheeler had planned it differently.

Starting out in business as an insurance agent 25 years before, he had carefully and conservatively, yet with a certain innate brilliance, weighed his chances of getting ahead; in his personal investments he had plunged at exactly the right moment; had paid regularly into a sizable endowment insurance policy (sacrificing his comforts to do so during the dismal years of the depression, a period which he had weathered far better than most men because of his native shrewdness and a certain dogged persistency in the pursuit of his ends). Now that he was fifty, his far-reaching plans had matured and borne fruit just about according to his own schedule, and he found himself in the enviable position of a man who could afford to live for the rest of his days on the fruits of his hard labors.

It was not many men who could boast of having attained to such a goal. Mr.

Wheeler had reached it, as we have said, only because he joined to considerable natural acumen in affairs of business a single-minded passion in the pursuit of his goal. He was very methodical by nature, was Mr. Wheeler, and every detail in his life was planned with an eye to the main purpose. Thus, for instance, early in his marriage he had impressed upon his wife that theirs was to be a one-child family, and nature had cooperated by making that one child a son, who could carry on the business after he himself had retired.

Not that Mr. Wheeler could be called miserly. He saw to it that he and his family lived in the comfort and small luxury appropriate to his circle. His name was always on the list of donors to the community chest and other worthy civic charities. But even his charities were carefully organized into his plans for the future; they were a necessary adjunct of his plans for success. Every penny given out in charity was carefully itemized, and at the end of the year listed under the proper heading in his personal account as being necessary for the securing and maintaining of good will.

Mr. Wheeler leaned over his wife and shook her gently, then with somewhat more vigor until at length she opened her eyes.

"Time to get up, Belle," he said. "I've got lots of things to do today, and I want to get an early start."

At eight-thirty Mr. Wheeler, refreshed by his morning shave and by his customary coffee, toast, two strips of bacon and one egg, bade his wife good-bye and set off in his car for his first appointment of the day. In his faultless grey tweeds and homburg he presented an imposing figure behind the wheel of his De Soto. Mr. Wheeler drove very carefully and conservatively; as he often

said to his friends, you couldn't be too careful these days, with so many lunatic drivers on the road. Mr. Wheeler had, he estimated, a good thirty years to live, and he had no intention of allowing them to be cut short.

At promptly nine o'clock Mr. Wheeler walked through the imposing front door of the Midwestern Trust Company. Here he was to meet by appointment with Mr. Palfrey, an officer of that organization, and to check over once more the condition of his modest investments. Now Mr. Wheeler took pride in the fact that he had never in his life been late for an appointment, and it annoyed him therefore to learn that Mr. Palfrey had not yet arrived at his office. Concealing his annoyance as best he could, Mr. Wheeler sat down in one of the comfortable chairs in the waiting room, picked up a magazine from the table, and began idly to page through it.

After a few moments the outer door opened, and he was somewhat surprised to see a priest come in, and one that he recognized, too. It was Father McDevitt, from Mr. Wheeler's own parish, St. Barbara's.

The priest selected a chair across from Mr. Wheeler, sank into it with a sigh, and then smiled across at his companion.

"Hello, Mr. Wheeler," he said.

"Hello, Father, I didn't expect to meet you here."

"I guess it is surprising in a way. I don't often have the occasion to visit the plush palaces of Mammon."

Father McDevitt spoke with a smile, but nevertheless Mr. Wheeler felt irked. He knew enough of his religion to know what Mammon stood for, and if there was one thing he did not like about his pastor, it was the fact that he seemed always to be enjoying a secret irony in regard to his more affluent parish-

ioners.

"As a matter of fact," Father McDevitt went on, "I'm here for a very special reason this morning. Mr. McReynolds, one of the Vice-Presidents, is a good friend of mine, and I'm going to ask his advice on how to set about securing a loan of \$50,000."

Mr. Wheeler raised his eyebrows in polite surprise.

"We simply must get to work on our new school," the priest went on. "Last year we had to turn away fifty children for lack of space."

"You don't say so!" murmured Mr. Wheeler. He thought he could see the trend of the conversation, and it made him a little uneasy.

"To put up the kind of building we need will cost us \$100,000. I have about half of it on hand, but for the other half we'll have to go into the hole."

"Well," said Mr. Wheeler, "I wish you luck."

"By the way," the priest said, "I don't remember seeing your name on the list of contributors to the project."

This was what Mr. Wheeler had been fearing. He looked down at his magazine, somewhat embarrassed.

"I've been quite busy, Father," he said. "You see, I've been getting ready to retire from my business, and we have been planning a trip—"

"You're getting ready to retire!" the priest said. "Well, congratulations! There aren't many men who can afford to retire at your age. Surely if you are that well fixed you'll be glad to help along with this important parish project."

A flush mounted to Mr. Wheeler's face. He looked directly at the priest.

"I'm afraid I'm not as well fixed as you seem to think," he said, "and I'm afraid I don't quite see the importance of the project you speak of. I haven't

any children in the school."

"Neither have a good many others who have given generously."

"I don't care what others have done. I've got to look out for myself. I made my money through hard work, and I can't be throwing it away on every scheme that comes along. I've got my own future to think of. I'll send you a check for ten dollars, but that is all you can expect from me."

And Mr. Wheeler, who had allowed himself to become quite wrought up, put his magazine up before his face.

The priest sat looking quietly at him for a moment.

"You needn't worry," he said gently. "This is the last time I'll ask you for a contribution to the school. But even at the risk of making you more angry, I must ask you about something more important. How about your soul, Mr. Wheeler? You yourself told me the last time we met that you hadn't gotten around to making your Easter duty this year."

Now that the subject of money was safely passed, Mr. Wheeler felt a little ashamed of himself. He lowered the magazine and looked at the priest with a tolerant smile.

"Yes, Father, unfortunately, it's true. I've been so busy that I never seemed to get time for it. But don't worry, Father. I'll take care of it. I'll have lots of time in the next few months. In fact, the way I figure it, I've got at least twenty years to take care of it." Mr. Wheeler stood up. The door of Mr. Palfrey's office was open, and Mr. Palfrey himself was waiting to do business. "Don't you worry, Father," he said again, and patted the priest's arm in a patronizing little gesture. "I'm no heathen, I'll take care of it in plenty of time."

Mr. Wheeler's spirits were quite

picked up by his lengthy interview with Mr. Palfrey. He received satisfactory information to the effect that his investments were all in good order, and would, barring a revolutionary upheaval, assure him of a good steady income for thirty years to come.

His next stop, after leaving the Trust Company, was at his own small, but neatly finished place of business on a street just off the main business artery of the town. He paused for a moment outside, and a feeling of justifiable pride took hold of him. On the large glass window was lettered the legend:

**ROBERT WHEELER
INSURANCE AGENCY**

The only change that would have to be made in that legend, he thought with satisfaction, would be to print "Jr." after the name. His son had, in fact, already taken hold of the business and was proving himself fully as adept as his father.

Mr. Wheeler entered through the front door and nodded courteously to the three girls working at their desks as he made his way to the little office in the rear.

"Good morning, Mr. Wheeler," the girls said, with a respect and deference that he found very soothing indeed.

But when he reached the office, he found that his son was absent at the moment, having gone out with a client to a nearby bank.

Mr. Wheeler allowed himself the luxury of sitting down at his desk and stretching out his feet beneath it. For the hundredth time, his orderly mind went over the preparations for the future. His income was assured, and as regards the immediate future, he had made reservations at one of the better hotels in an exclusive little Florida re-

sort; in his pocket were the railroad tickets which would take him and his wife, comfortably established in a compartment, away from the cold north for a long and glorious vacation. After a few months in Florida, when the worst of the northern winter was past, they would return to their comfortable home, and Mr. Wheeler would assume the role of a gentleman of leisure, interested mildly in civic affairs, always ready to give advice to the young men just beginning the hard climb to success, now and then looking paternally into the business affairs of his son, spending much of his time at the club, where he and a few chosen souls, similarly endowed with plenty of leisure and the money to enjoy it, would discuss over their whiskey and soda the affairs of the world at large.

It was a pleasant prospect, and Mr. Wheeler sighed in anticipation. But thinking of the club reminded him that he had another little matter to take care of. He must go to the club and pay his membership fee. While he was at it, he would pay up for the next five years, and then it would be off his mind. He consulted his watch. He would proceed to the club now, take care of his business, and perhaps have a bite of lunch there.

He went to the door of the office and spoke to the secretary seated at her desk just outside.

"Miss Mackey," he said, "will you call a taxi for me, and will you tell young Mr. Wheeler when he returns that I shall be back after lunch."

At the club Mr. Wheeler took care of his business, remarking to the secretary as he did so:

"You'll be seeing a lot of me from now on."

"We will, Mr. Wheeler?"

"Yes. I've retired, you know. I'm

The Liguorian

going to be a gentleman of leisure from now on. I'm going to enjoy life."

Going into the club grill, he chanced to meet an old friend of his, and they had lunch together, and afterwards enjoyed their cigars in the lounge, seated in the big comfortable chairs that looked out over the busy street below.

Promptly at one o'clock Mr. Wheeler arose to his feet, laid his cigar in the ash-tray, and bade good-bye to his friend. He then secured his hat and coat from the check-room and stepped out through the front entrance. For a moment he stood looking up at the imposing white stone facade of the building. This was a very exclusive club, and even the building had a certain air of permanence and stability. There was no nonsense about it, none of your modern frills and frippery. Here was conservatism itself enshrined in enduring stone.

Even as this reflection passed through his mind, Mr. Wheeler felt a certain dizziness overtake him. It was an unusual thing, and he did not quite know what to make of it at first. He put out his hand to the balustrade to steady himself, but the dizziness increased, and there was a great roaring sound in his ears. Mr. Wheeler caught his breath, which for some strange reason seemed

to be coming very short. He was clinging to the balustrade with both hands now, and became vaguely aware of someone standing beside him, looking at him anxiously.

"Help me!" Mr. Wheeler muttered thickly. Then it was as if something snapped inside him, and Mr. Wheeler tumbled head first down the fine imposing steps of his club and lay in a heap at the bottom.

*"The land of a certain rich man
brought forth plenty of fruit.*

And he said to his soul:

*Soul, thou hast much goods laid up
for many years.*

*Take thy rest; eat, drink, and make
good cheer.*

But God said to him:

Thou fool!

*This night they shall require thy
soul of thee,*

*And whose then shall be the things
thou hast provided?"*

It is too bad that Mr. Wheeler had never found the time or the occasion to reflect upon that little parable. He would never have the time or the occasion again. He lay at the foot of the steps of his exclusive club, arms outstretched, eyes wide open and staring. Mr. Wheeler was dead.

Pete

What gets me down, said Pete, is this:

I'm always bent with trouble;

While wicked men (of whom I'm none)

In joy get paid off double.

But Pete forgets that God has placed

A price on heaven's treasure;

You purchase *that* with timely grief

And *hell* with ill-timed pleasure.

L. F. H.

Pre-Marriage Clinic

D. F. Miller

Age Differences for Marriage

Problem: "Does ten years' difference in age make happiness in marriage difficult? I am twenty years old and I have been going with a man who is thirty. My parents are furious about this, saying that I cannot possibly be happy with a man so much older than myself. He wants to marry me, and I am in love with him, but I am all confused because of my parents' attitude. They read *THE LIQUORIAN* like I do, and if you answer my question in it, maybe it will do some good. I know I will surely consider what you have to say.

Solution: All other things being favorable to a happy marriage, ten years of difference in age, especially at your particular ages and when the man is the older person need not be an obstacle to your happiness in marriage. We know of many happy marriages with as much and more difference in age between the man and the woman.

Note the condition, however, that all other things must be favorable to a happy marriage. Are you quite sure that the only objection your parents have to this marriage is based on age? I can think of some circumstances that could make the age difference important.

For example, if the man is not of your faith, I would be very slow to tell you that age makes no difference. You are young enough not to need to rush into this marriage as if it were your last chance; indeed, if the age difference were even less, I could give you many arguments against the possibility of happiness in such a marriage. If this man is ten years older than you are, he will almost certainly be very uninclined to take seriously your religion, as you must want any prospective husband to take your religion seriously; he may even be inclined to dictate to you about religion. If there were any evidence of such a possibility, and your parents may be able to see that better than you can, I know that any responsible Catholic would advise you against the marriage.

Another example: If your thirty year old friend has succeeded in drawing you into habits of sin, you have a very poor chance of happiness in marriage with him. This would be a sign that he has grown to thirty without acquiring habits of virtue and self-control, and it is not likely that he will acquire these things after you marry him.

But if you are both Catholics, truly in love, and both eager to avoid sin and aware of the serious responsibilities of marriage, I would say that you may, with excellent prospects of happiness, think of marriage. May this statement convince your parents of what their attitude should be.

The Truth About Snakes

Snakes are all but universally feared, because they are almost universally misunderstood. Take note of the facts set down here, and be kind to snakes.

R. J. Weninger

ALMOST EVERYBODY has witnessed the panic that can be caused by the sudden appearance of a snake. On a bright summer day a housewife is sitting on the lawn, sewing basket in lap and hands busy mending or sewing. Suddenly a scream pierces the air. Neighbors come running to offer aid . . . What happened? The housewife had seen a snake, slithering over the grass near her feet.

The incident is not uncommon, but the panic is unreasonable. With a slight knowledge of snake lore, any person could tell at a glance whether there was anything to fear. There are two prominent features by which poisonous snakes can be distinguished from non-poisonous, and the chances are 100 to one that what the housewife saw was a harmless garter or grass snake. The head of a poisonous snake is always clearly distinct from the body; it will be triangular or circular in shape and larger than the thickness of the body. The head of a non-poisonous snake seems to be merely a continuation of the body; it is no thicker than the body and may even taper off somewhat. Similarly, the tail of a snake will reveal whether it is of a poisonous variety or not. Non-poisonous snakes have tails that taper off gradually and smoothly; poisonous snakes do not have tapering tails; their bodies round off abruptly to an end.

Only monkeys fascinate people more than snakes do. But monkeys are

enjoyed, while snakes are feared. Yet no creature of the animal world has been more misunderstood than the latter, largely as a result of ignorance and superstition. Both for their attractiveness and for the practical good they do, snakes, with the exception of a few harmful species, should be protected by mankind.

Snakes are found more universally in the world than almost any other animal. Only New Zealand, Hawaii, Iceland, and a few small sea islands have no snakes. Oh, yes, Ireland! Occasionally snakes are brought into Ireland or escape there from docked ships, but they never propagate there. A few years ago a small, harmless snake, less than two feet in length, was found in Dublin. It attracted so much attention that it was placed on exhibition in the National Museum. It is a common belief that Ireland is so hostile to venomous reptiles that they cannot live there; in fact, they are said to perish, sometimes, when brought within a mile or so from the coast.

When one comes across a snake, the wise thing to do is to face it, not to kill it at once. Just stand and look at it. The snake, even though poisonous, does not want to fight or kill; it only wants to get away alive and unhurt. It fears man. Not able to see well, unable to hear very much, it relies greatly on a keen sense of smell, and on the tongue that is seen darting out of its mouth as a feeler for danger. (This

The Liguorian

tongue has nothing to do with its ability to impart poison.) It hates the smell of humanity and will try to get away from it. A prudent man, therefore, can watch a snake without being harmed, and he will see a really beautiful animal.

There are many myths about snakes, and some of the most absurd are deeply rooted in the minds of men.

A persistent snake fable is that of the "hoop snake." The tale is that this snake has a poisonous stinger in its tail like that of a wasp. It takes the form of a hoop by placing its tale in its mouth, and then rolls along like a wheel. When close enough to the victim it is pursuing, the tail is released and drives the stinger into the enemy. Should the victim be fortunate enough to dodge, and a tree be struck by this stinger, it is said that the tree will surely die. The truth is that there is no snake that can possibly form itself into a hoop, and none that has a stinger in its tail. Any snake could easily place its tail in its mouth, but there is none that could then rise up on edge and roll like a wheel.

Another absurd fable is that of the "milk snake," so called because it is supposed to suck milk from cows. The truth is that the formation of a snake's mouth is such that it would be impossible for it to suck milk from a cow's udder without so injuring it that the cow would wake up the neighborhood by its thrashing around. Small snakes could not even exert enough pressure to obtain even a drop of milk. The snakes seen around barns, even black snakes which grow to quite a formidable size, are a great blessing to the farmer; they live on rats and mice and other small animals, and are not poisonous.

Folklore is full of stories about enormous snakes, some rivalling the huge sea serpents that are reported once or

twice a century. Such a tremendous snake is said to have stopped the Roman army of Atilius Regulus in its tracks in a campaign in Africa; the reptile was reported as 120 feet long. One Ceylon traveler, admitting that he had never seen more than thirty feet of one snake, assures us that there was evidence that a snake had been killed which measured 60 feet in length, with a circumference of six feet.

As a matter of fact, there are snakes in some parts of the world that are big enough to satisfy anybody, with no need of resorting to imagination. The anaconda, in the Amazon region of Brazil, reaches a maximum of 46 feet in length. That is larger than they come even in the D. T.'s.

Some people have wondered what would happen if two snakes should try to swallow each other, tail first. As they reached the half way mark, they would be swallowing part of themselves. What would be left if they kept right on going? Figure it out for yourself.

In Brazil there is a strong traditional belief that no padre will ever be bitten by a poisonous snake. (Poisonous snakes abound there.) The tradition is the result of a prediction made by a saintly old Brazilian priest many years ago. While American missionaries in Brazil do not take any chances with snakes that they can avoid, it is nevertheless true that there is no record of a Brazilian missionary being bitten by a poisonous snake. In fact, Joseph McDonough tells one story of a New England native working in Brazil that confirmed his belief in the prophecy.

Stationed deep in the jungle area of Brazil, this padre was one day about to take a siesta during the unbearably hot afternoon. As he sat on the bed, he heard the fearful rattle of a snake about to strike. Gazing about without

The Liguorian

motion, he saw, right behind his pillow, the smouldering eyes and darting twitching, forked tongue. Slowly his fingers found the hard, solid butt of his riding whip. With a prayer and a quick swing, he struck the snake and knocked it across the room. When he had stamped the life out of it, he saw that it was not a rattlesnake, but the even more deadly jararaca. Then he remembered that the jararaca is a snake that never warns its victims; it strikes without a sound. Puzzled, he lay down for his rest, when he heard the rattle again. Then he began to laugh, as he reached into his back pocket and took out a half-filled bottle of aspirin tablets. It was their rattle that had warned him.

While speaking of rattlers, it may be mentioned that they do not always rattle before striking, and have no intention of being a good sport by giving a warning. Their rattles are merely rings of dried and hardened skin that are caught on the button at the end of the tail when the snake sloughs its skin. Most naturalists think that, when excited, the snake nervously twitches its tail with the result that the rings of old skin emit a sound like a rattle. Nor is it possible to judge the age of a snake by the number of rattles on its tail. Like most snakes, the rattler may molt several times a year, depending on the heat of the summer, and with each molting, a new rattle is added.

It is no myth that rattlers are poisonous, although tall tales are told of the power they have to kill. There is an old frontier story of a man who died from the bite of a rattle snake. His buddies left him to lie on the range, after stripping him of his money and clothes. Soon one of these men died and the same treatment was accorded him. Then another died. Finally it was discovered that the rattler had left one of its

fangs embedded in one of the shoes of its first victim.

Will the tail of a recently killed snake continue to move until sundown? Often nerve reactions continue to move a member of a dead animal for some time after death. A snake's tail is no exception, but that it continues to wiggle until sunset and then stops, is pure fable.

During frontier days, cowboys who slept in the open often encircled themselves with a hair rope as a protection against snakes. Such means of protection are by no means infallible, though it is true that snakes do their best to avoid the odor of man, and might crawl around a rope that had been handled a great deal by men.

Another popular myth is that which attributes to snakes the power to charm their prey. Long scientific observations have led to the conclusion that birds and small mammals remain still when threatened by a snake, not because they are charmed, but because of curiosity associated with the power of attention. At a sudden or noisy movement they would dart off at once; but if the movement be slow, silent, stealthy, they remain motionless, interested, watchful. Snakes may take advantage of this curiosity if they are quick enough, but so may cats, and even human beings. Most snakes do not attack unless bothered, and will usually flee from a man. They can exercise no hypnotic effect whatsoever.

That is why, in the presence of a snake, one should make no sudden movements that may be interpreted by the snake as an attack. Above all, people should learn to distinguish between poisonous and non-poisonous snakes, and should never kill the latter. They serve a useful and even necessary purpose in the scheme of things.



For Wives and Husbands Only

D. F. Miller

Problem: "I am a Catholic who, twenty years ago, lapsed from my faith and married a non-Catholic man before a judge. Within the past few years I have come to my senses and realize what a terrible thing I did. I want to go back to my church and the sacraments. But here is my difficulty. My husband is bitterly anti-Catholic, so much so that he would never consent to even a meeting with a priest, much less to a marriage ceremony before a priest. Outside of that we get along well together, though I can never be truly happy until I am properly married as a Catholic. Is there any way, aside from leaving my husband, that I can return to the sacraments?"

Solution: This is the kind of problem that you should take to one of the priests in your neighborhood. Something can be done, but there are many conditions and circumstances that will have to be examined. Here are some of them.

For a Catholic who has attempted marriage outside the Church, and whose partner refuses under any circumstances to appear before a priest, there is the possibility of what is called a *sanatio in radice*. This is a validating of the marriage without the usual ceremony of marriage. This can be granted only by the Holy See, through the bishop and pastor of the Catholic involved. And the following conditions must be present before it can be granted even by the Holy See.

1. There must be no impediment of the natural law against the marriage. For example, if one partner had been validly married before, and if the previous partner was still living, the second marriage could not be validated even by a *sanatio in radice*.

2. The reason for not having a marriage ceremony must be grave, i. e., in this case it must be certain that the non-Catholic would never consent to appear before a priest for a Catholic marriage ceremony.

3. There must be a continuation of consent to the marriage contract on the part of both. This seems to be present in the case presented.

4. If there are children, the Catholic must promise to do everything possible to make up for past scandal and to bring them into and to rear them in the Catholic faith.

Only your local pastor can rightly judge of all these things, and only he can take the case to the proper authorities for proper presentation to the Holy See. I suggest that you go to him at once and tell him your full story.

Willie Becomes a Father

An unusual sort of fatherhood, this, and it very nearly broke up Willie's romance.

E. F. Miller

WHEN THE priest instructed Willie Caboot, a born American whose mother and father had come from Russia, in the doctrines and practices of the Catholic religion, he did not go into the matter of spiritual relationships. He may have mentioned them; most probably he did; but his words on the subject made no impression on Willie's mind. Spiritual relationships might just as well have been skipped entirely.

This does not mean that Willie Caboot was in any way dull or impervious to knowledge. He had passed his grades in school with medium success. He could add and subtract and read the daily paper without the aid of a dictionary. Not all his confreres of collegiate days could make so great a boast. When he graduated from the university he was amongst the top seventy-five in mental accomplishment.

Willie was known far and wide in America, not so much for what he did with his brains as for what he did with his body. Possessed of a pair of shoulders as broad as a barrel, and standing six feet two in his bare feet, he managed to make every All-American football team in the country in his senior year. His courage was the subject of innumerable pieces in the daily papers. One such story was this.

In the invasion of Southern France during the war Willie was a part of the first assault. His job was more than that of a mere rifleman. Just as the LCT began its run for the shore in the dimness of the morning, the unit doctor took Willie aside in one of the hatches

of the ship.

"Willie," said the doctor, "I have a case of medical whiskey here that must go in with the troops. It's heavy and it's going to be hard to get ashore. You're the only man who can do it. So, that's your special assignment for the invasion. And if you break or lose a single bottle, I'll have you busted to a buck private. Understand?"

"Yes sir," said Willie.

The little landing craft was about a block or two from shore when it hit a mine, and all the soldiers, including Willie, were cast into the sea. What happened from then on is not clear. But in the minds of the men who survived and who reached the beach safely the picture is very clear of Willie wading through the water shorewards, carrying the case of whiskey on his head. Nor was a bottle lost or broken. A cheer went up that was heard above the bursting of shells and the whine of bullets. Willie had saved the day, not so much by saving the whiskey as by his exhibition of ingenuity and courage.

It was shortly after his return from Europe and the war that Willie decided to become a Catholic. His buddies had for the most part been Catholic, and although they never tried to swing him to their way of thinking by arguing with him, they did impress him by their convictions and their tranquil assurance that they were right in things religious in a world that had no assurance of rightness in anything. The result was that without seeking advice from any one he went to a priest and asked to be

instructed.

Conversion was no idle or conventional gesture to Willie Caboot. He entered the Faith as he was wont to enter a football game or with the same determination with which he brought the medical whiskey to shore literally from the bottom of the sea. If the Catholic religion was the true religion, then all men were fools for not becoming Catholics. He could not understand the blindness of his former friends. They had no answers to the mysteries of life and death and all the rest; and yet they refused to take the step that would lead them to the answers. He tried to force them to take the step. He hounded them with exhortations and smothered them with books on apologetics. They laughed at him. Hard words followed and then fist fights. The result of his apostolate was that he went about with a series of black eyes and few conversions for all his pains.

Three years after his entry into the Church Willie met Sue Smith. Sue was a nurse in the hospital that Willie went to in order to have his tonsils removed. Though he remained in the hospital only two days, he was in love, or thought he was in love, when he left. Sue thought she was in love too, but not quite so surely. But Willie was nice—she had to admit that to herself. She liked him. Perhaps more would come later on. She would wait and see. As far as Willie was concerned, it was love at first sight. Nor could he be blamed for feeling the way he did. Sue was beautiful.

In regard to women there are degrees of beauty. Some women are more beautiful than others. What this intangible element is that makes one woman more beautiful than another is not patent; at least it is not universally agreed on. Some believe that beauty consists in perfect symmetry of external parts. It is

the exact proportion of eyes and nose and mouth and all the other parts of the body one to the other. Not only are the parts perfectly formed in themselves in accord with their purpose, but they are in precise and correct relationship to each other, so that together they form a perfect whole.

Others think that beauty consists of an interior quality that is expressed through external parts and reflects an ideal—something calculated to raise the spirit of the onlooker above the mere material and sodden things of earth. Thus, a woman having within her the flame of self-sacrifice and reflecting the light of this flame through her eyes and mouth and features is beautiful even though her nose is a little shorter than it should be and a trifle out of line with her ears.

Sue measured up to both these ideas of beauty. Externally she was complete. Willie had no desire to see her nose longer or shorter than it was, or her eyes a different shade of blue from that which they already were. He thought her hair was wonderful (a soft and curly brown), and if some one had asked him to suggest an improvement on her complexion, he would have been stumped to give an answer.

There seemed to be a flame inside her too which made itself manifest in all that she was and in all that she did. It was a flame of cheerfulness, contentment, serenity. Everybody seemed to like her; she seemed to like everybody. And while there was nothing of the prude about her, she did contain a certain reserve and modesty that warned the reckless against trespassing and poaching.

So, Sue was beautiful according to all the known standards of beauty. And Willie could not be blamed for making her his girl as soon as his throat was

well enough to permit him speech and his health improved enough to allow him to go out and take her with him. He took her to the movies; he invited her to his home; he discussed with her the condition of the world. And in the course of his discussions he found out that she was not a Catholic. For a minute or two he could not believe it. It did not seem possible.

But he was not discouraged. He would see to it that she became a Catholic even if he had to pound the truth into her head with his naked hands. It was not right that so fine a girl and one whom he liked so much should go through life without the very thing that could make her even more beautiful and fine than she already was. Anyway, he would not marry her if she refused to become a Catholic, and not merely for his sake, but on conviction. He wanted his wife to be one with him in mind as well as in heart and body. He knew instinctively that the marriage (if it should come off) would not work if he and his wife held different views about the most important things of life. He told Sue so.

"You see, honey," he said, "it's this way. You really can't know anything about me until you know what goes on inside me. I don't want you to like me just because I still got all my hair. That would be like buying a house for its paint. The main part of me is on the inside—what I believe, what are my convictions, and so forth. Until you learn all that, I'll be nothing more to you than a lot of muscle and skin topped by a head with a hole in it. For all you know right now, I might be the kind of man that believes in wife-beating or in wife-leaving which is worse. But in order to get you to marry me, if that should ever happen,—and you are a most beautiful little apple, I swear

—I might hide all this until I got you in my hands and under my roof. Then I could beat you black and blue and you wouldn't be able to do a thing about it because you'd have sworn to stay with me for better or worse until death, and you're the kind that would never go back on a promise. So you see, I'm really playing square with you by insisting that you learn what kind of a man I am by learning the kind of religion that I follow. You'll never know me until you know what a Catholic believes. I'm not kidding. How about it? Will you let me take you to a priest so that he can tell you a few things about me?"

Sue had never met and talked to a priest in her whole life which until now had lasted just twenty-two years. She was a little bit afraid of priests. At the same time she had a mind of her own. She was not a feather to be pushed around by every wind that came along. While she laid no claim to any religion of her own, she wasn't going to be taken in by the Catholic religion just because Willie gave her a bill of sale. At any rate, Willie seemed to be taking a lot for granted. She had never said that she would marry him. He had not even proposed to her. And here he was, talking as though it were almost all set and as though she had nothing to say about it. At the same time the thought of losing him was not pleasant. Well, there'd be no harm in looking into his religion. But she'd be wary. She'd watch her step for traps and tricks that would trip her into falling.

Willie took her to the same priest that instructed him. And it needed no more than the first six or seven instructions to cause Sue to waver. Everything seemed so logical and true. No statement was made without a proof being added. And she was told that she could

put up any objection that she wanted. She did. But each objection was answered in such a way that she had nothing more to say. However, it was the lesson on baptism that completed her conviction that the front door to heaven was the Catholic Church and that she had better start heading for that door or else she might not get in at all. The priest did little more than explain the meaning of the sacrament, its method of administration and how essential it was for salvation. "Unless a man be baptized with water and the Holy Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

Not only did absolute conviction come over her, but so strange a surge of love for Willie that she could hardly refrain from running over to him even in the presence of the priest and throwing her arms around his neck. She blushed at the thought; but she was not ashamed of it. She felt strong enough at that moment to die both for her new-found Faith and for Willie, if need be; or for either. Strangest of all, she felt that even in the overpowering love that was sweeping over her for Willie, she could sacrifice that love if God wanted her to do it as a price to be paid for what she had found. "No, dear God, please don't ask me," she whispered to herself. "But if you want it, God, I am ready."

Sue did not know it then. But the grace of the Holy Spirit had come down upon her as certainly as it had come down upon the Apostles. She felt like a different person. She felt that she could sing and dance and laugh until she cried. All her doubts and worries were settled now whereas only a short time before nothing was settled. She had been adrift, like a stick floating with the current of a stream. It was as though she were coming home, or rather, had arrived home, after a long and lonesome absence. Well, if that was the

Catholic religion, she could never get enough of it. One had to experience what it could give to know what actually it was.

After the instruction was over Willie and Sue walked to the park hand in hand. They went to the place where Willie had first introduced the subject of religion. It was a favorite place of theirs. They sat down on a bench near the edge of a tiny lake on which ducks could be seen swimming in the moonlight.

"Tell me," said Willie. "What do you think? Do you like the Catholic religion?"

She told him what had happened.

Then she added, "But I'm scared."

"Scared?" asked Willie. "Scared of what?"

"You heard the priest say that if a person isn't baptized, she can't go to heaven if she dies. I'm scared I might die before I'm baptized. Wouldn't that be terrible?"

"Say, that's right, Sue," exclaimed Willie, also scared. He stood up and looked anxiously into Sue's face. "How do you feel? You look sort of pale. You're not sick, are you? You don't have any pains, do you? Be honest, Sue. You're sure that you're alright?"

"Sure I'm alright. But I might die during my sleep. I've known lots of people who died that way. I'm still scared. Isn't there any thing we can do?"

Willie began pacing back and forth in front of the bench. Suddenly he stopped, snapped his fingers and said: "Say, I've got it. Remember what the priest said? 'Anybody can baptize in case of necessity.' This is a case of necessity. You might die in your sleep tonight, though God forbid. I'd better baptize you so that we can be sure you're ready for going to heaven. Come on."

He seized her by the hand and led her down to the shore of the lake. Taking a cigarette package from his pocket, he removed the cigarettes, filled the container with water and holding it in his hand, said: "But first of all, Sue, you have to be real sorry for all your sins. You don't want to go to hell, do you? I'm sure that I don't want you to go to hell. I couldn't think of any thing more terrible than that. And you're never going to commit another sin, are you?" He held the paper of water as though it were a weapon, ready to be used if the girl showed the slightest disinclination to be sorry.

"Don't be silly," she said. "Of course I'm sorry. Of course I don't want to do a sin against God again."

"O.K., then. Here goes. Bend back your head."

Sue bent back her head, and Willie, starting at the forehead and allowing the water to flow over her whole face, cried out in a loud voice: "Sue, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Sue gasped. But only for a moment. Willie's arms were around her, and strong man though he was, he was crying. "My little Sue," he said. "My precious, beautiful, little Sue. I couldn't say this before because you were a heathen and a pagan. But I can say it now. Sue, will you marry me?"

For answer Sue lifted up her dripping face. The light in her eyes and the smile on her lips were answer enough. Reverently, as though he were dealing with an angel or a saint like Agnes or Cecilia, he kissed her. Then he held her at arm's length and said, "Do you know, Sue, your soul is so white that not even the clouds can compare with it. God just came down and washed it with His own hands. And now you're His child as surely as you are your mother's. I'm

almost afraid to touch you."

"You can walk me home, can't you?" said Sue. Willie took her by the arm and walked her home. They were so happy that they found no need for conversation.

It was at the next instruction the following week that Willie learned of spiritual relationship; and so did Sue. "Before going on to confirmation," began the priest, "there is one last thing that I want to say about baptism. Perhaps you've heard about spiritual relationship. It only means this. A sponsor and the person for whom he is sponsor may not marry each other. A spiritual relationship is established just like the relationship between a brother and a sister. Of course, there is seldom any difficulty about this, especially when the person baptized is an infant. Generally there is an age difference of twenty or thirty years. The sponsor would be really robbing the cradle if he tried to marry the one for whom he stood up. The same kind of relationship is established between the one who does the baptizing and the one who is baptized. They also become spiritually related and may not marry. For example," the priest smiled innocently as though he were presenting an impossible supposition, "for example, if you, Willie, were to stand up for Sue when she is baptized, or what is more probable, if you were to baptize her, then you could not marry her. In the former case you would become her spiritual brother; in the latter case you would become her spiritual father. You never heard of a father marrying his daughter, did you?" Again he smiled as though he had cracked a fairly good joke.

It was no joke to Willie and Sue. Willie's face had become as white as a piece of paper. He sat on the chair as though he were rooted to it. Sue said

to herself, "This is it. God doesn't want me to have him. That's what I have to pay to become a Catholic." Tears came into her eyes. Willie was on his feet now. He spoke wildly. He pointed his finger at the priest.

"What!" he cried. "You mean to say, Father, that I can't marry Sue? Tell me what I have to do. I baptized Sue out in the park the night she had her last instruction. Tell me what I have to do to get it straightened out. Do I write to the Pope? Or do I have to go and see him in person? I'll go. I'll take a plane tomorrow. I'll see every Cardinal in Rome, if necessary. I'll . . ."

The priest gently pushed Willie back onto his chair and covered his mouth with his palm. "Easy, Willie," he said. "Easy, or you'll get a stroke. Then you'll marry nobody." He waited for a moment until Willie pulled himself together. Then he went on. "Now tell me exactly what happened. And don't leave out a single thing."

It was Sue who gave the explanation and told the story. "It was my fault, Father. I was so afraid to die that I didn't want to wait a minute. I'm a nurse, you know, and I see so many people, even young people, die suddenly without their knowing what is happening that I feared the same thing might happen to me. That's why I was so happy when Willie said that he'd baptize me right there in the park. The water was handy and everything was just right. We didn't know that we were doing wrong, honest we didn't."

"How did Willie do it?" asked the priest.

"He filled an empty cigarette package with water," answered Sue, "and poured the water all over my face. He almost drowned me. While he poured the water he said, 'Sue I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and

of the Holy Ghost.'"

"Well, he did it right at least, and you're truly baptized, Sue. But it's too bad that you didn't come back to me when that fear of death came upon you. A lay person should baptize only when there is *real* danger of death. However, I admire the faith of both of you. You wouldn't have done it if you hadn't believed it absolutely necessary at the moment. And don't worry about the spiritual relationship. Willie is your father, alright, Sue. But under the circumstances I can obtain the necessary dispensation so that you can be married. But wait—do you really intend to get married? You haven't said anything to me about it, you know."

Sue opened her purse and drew forth a diamond. "Willie gave me this," she said, "the day after he baptized me. It was right after he baptized me that he proposed. He said that he wasn't able to propose before because I was still a pagan. I resolved not to put on my diamond until we had told you of our plans. I figured that we could not be engaged for sure until we were certain that we could get married. May I put it on now, Father?"

"If you're sure that you want to take a chance on a man like Willie, put it on."

"I'll put it on," said Willie. Before Sue could protest Willie was fitting the ring on her finger.

Then a beautiful thing happened. Both Willie and Sue were on their knees before the priest. "Bless us, Father," said Willie, "so that we'll always be as happy as we are tonight."

And again, strange though it may sound, Willie was crying.

It took quite some time before the instruction on confirmation got under way.

Readers Retort

In this unique feature, readers are invited to state their disagreement with articles and features appearing in *The Liguorian*. Letters should be signed, and the editors reserve the right to condense the longer ones.

Baltimore, Maryland

"Kindly cancel my subscription to *THE LIGUORIAN*. I regret to say that I do not like some of the articles appearing in it, especially the verses in the September issue about the public schools. These were disgusting. Did you ever attend a public school? . . ."

Mrs. U. M.

It is the law of the land that religion may not be taught in the public schools, and according to one interpretation, not even outside the public school in school time. Our verses merely spotlighted this situation, which hundreds of American leaders and thinkers have called ruinous to the moral upbringing of children.

The editors.

Sheboygan, Wisconsin

"How do you think I felt when a non-Catholic friend of mine picked up *THE LIGUORIAN* and read the verse about the masters of lodges being 'dopes'? Embarrassed and ashamed are mild terms for it, and the editors of *THE LIGUORIAN* should be embarrassed and ashamed too. My friend is a commander of a lodge and he is certainly no dope. I am sure that word fits the one who composed the verse far better. It shows lack of breeding and the poorest taste. Some changes should be made when we Catholics have to watch who reads our Catholic magazines. We should feel proud of them and not have to apologize for anything in them . . ."

J. F.

We are sorry that a bit of satire missed fire and that offense was taken. The point intended was that a man like Sam, who

was the subject of the verse, and who gave up his faith because he did not like obedience, would show his folly by turning around and giving obedience to a "dope". That does not make all lodge-rulers "dopes."

The editors.

San Diego, California

"I do not wish to renew my subscription to *THE LIGUORIAN*. The fact is, many articles in it are to the point, interesting and up to date. On the other hand too many of your articles are tainted with sarcasm. Now, sarcasm is fine in small doses but when half your articles are saturated with it, it becomes unbearable. Then, too, your stand on the Taft-Hartley law is still in my mind. I do not expect you to agree with my views, but by the same token I do not believe I should be expected to support a periodical that scorns my views. I believe that that is only logic . . ."

M. S.

*In the last two issues of *THE LIGUORIAN* there were 19 articles and 12 full page features. Of these 31 items we can find only two that have any intent or appearance of satire, a rather modest proportion of what our former San Diego reader calls "the element of sarcasm." Such are the perils, however, of the use of the literary medium of satire, which some commentators have said is sadly deficient in Catholic publications. . . . We are saddened to be confronted with another example of how people do not want to read or hear any expression of opinions different from their own on debatable issues such as the Taft-Hartley law. For ourselves, we want to read*

The Liguorian

every possible presentation of different opinions than our own on controversial matters, lest me miss some of the evidence.

The editors.

St. Paul, Minnesota
"The Bystander in the September LIGUORIAN states: 'Thus even reputable newspapers are taken in and launch forth their pontifications that there is no bigotry in the Barden bill because the most important thing in America is to uphold separation of church and state.' . . . The most important thing for Catholics in the United States is to uphold the First Amendment to the Constitution which reads in part: 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.' Our first Cardinal, the eminent Cardinal Satolli, instructed the Catholics of the nation to go forward, with the Book of God in one hand and the Constitution of the United States in the other.' A clearer definition of separation of church and state has never been penned, and its wisdom is reflected in the growth and harmony of the Catholic Church in America. Cardinal Satolli knew that the Catholic Church could never be blended with American politics . . . For Catholics to insist on inclusion in the Barden bill would, no doubt, require an amendment to the Constitution, and if that were accomplished it would act to bring the Church within the pale of federal and state tax laws . . . Obviously the teachings of Cardinal Satolli should be adhered to . . ."

W. H. O'T.

We are certain that Cardinal Satolli understood the original and only intended meaning of the First Amendment, viz., that Congress should never act to "establish" one religious denomination as the official religion of the United States. It is improbable that he even

suspected the use to which the First Amendment is being put today, as a mandate to prevent any cooperation between the government and the private schools of the land. His "Bible in one hand and Constitution in the other" would seem to us far more suggestive of cooperation than of completely independent activity. However, we do recognize the danger of state interference that might follow upon state assistance to private schools, and feel that just as much clear thinking and honest propaganda must be exercised to prevent that as to bring about a just treatment of all the nation's children, no matter what school they attend.

The editors.

Omaha, Nebraska

"I have just read your article 'For Wives and Husbands Only' in the September issue. I happen to live in a home which is similar in circumstances (with an alcoholic father). Unless you have lived in such a home you have no right to answer the woman as you did, for you have no conception of what it is really like. . . . What I particularly disagree with are the reasons you gave the wife for her husband's drinking. In our case the quarrels stem from the drinking and not the other way around. . . ."

N. N.

We did not state that the only cause of alcoholism in a husband is the quarrelling and nagging of a wife. We are acquainted with too many actual cases in which an innocent and truly virtuous wife is made to suffer from the drinking of her husband. We also know of cases in which wives do not realize the effect their nagging and quarrelling have had on their husbands, and feel that it is good for all of them to examine themselves on this point. In some cases, no matter what the wife does, her husband

The Liguorian

will not improve because drinking to excess is only one of his evil habits. It remains true, however, that for confirmed alcoholics there will be no cure without sympathy, patience, prayer and understanding.

The editors.

Riverdale, Maryland

"Do you not think it would be a kindly act on your part to publish a few of the many nice things that the white southerners do for the colored people? . . . Publishing only the ill and never the good about white southerners helps to keep the fire of animosity burning. There is an old adage that reads: One may say a thousand kind words, do a thousand kind deeds which are taken for granted, but one uncharitable act is scattered to the four winds of the earth, and it is never forgotten.' . . . I believe that if your paper, along with other Catholic literature, would publish some of the good things done by southern white people for the colored, and omit the unkind ones, it would do far more to bring about amity between the two sections of the country, and help dispel southern pre-

judice against our church . . ."

H. R. E.

We agree with our correspondent that examples of true charity and the upholding of justice between the races should be given the widest publicity. Over the years we have tried to carry out such a policy, e. g., in the story of St. Louis University opening its halls to the colored, in the story of what the Catholic Committee of the South is doing, in the story of a great white leader in Atlanta, Georgia, refusing a high office in an organization unless the organization went on record as against racial discrimination, and in many other stories. However, we do believe that an important end is to be served in now and then publishing dramatic examples of injustice and discrimination between the races. It has rightly been said that prejudice has to be learned from one's elders; it is not natural to the human heart. We believe that the learning of prejudice will be impeded if people can be made to see it in all its crassness and ugliness.

The editors.

The Unguarded Pope

When Pius X was elected Pope, it came as a great shock to him; never imagining himself to be eligible, he had actually bought his return ticket to Milan before the election took place.

After the ceremonies, he was escorted to his room in the Vatican, and after a long period of prayer, retired to his bed.

Perhaps it was only natural that he could not fall asleep, but tossed and turned, and was further disturbed and puzzled by the sound of someone walking back and forth in the corridor outside his door.

Finally he could bear it no longer, but arose, threw on his unfamiliar white cassock, and went out into the passage.

There he saw a tall Swiss Guard with a pike. The Guard fell to his knees, but the Pope took him by the arm and raised him up.

"What are you doing here, my son?" he said.

"Holy Father," the Guard replied, "we are on guard outside your door both day and night."

"Well, my son," said the Pope, "Put yourself off guard now and go straight to bed. Then perhaps both of us will get some sleep."

The story is related in the British Catholic journal, *Context*.



Character Test (79)

L. M. Merrill

On Slyness

A sly person is one who practices the art of so foreseeing and arranging circumstances in which he will be involved that he will always come off better than he deserves. Ordinarily the word "sly" is not used of great criminals or great liars. It belongs most properly to those who, in the ordinary relationships of life, have a keen and far-sighted eye for their own interests and clever ways of making sure that those interests will be served. And the means they use are not openly and clearly immoral.

Here are some examples. A sly person will foresee, long before there is any appearance of the fact, that some day he will be in competition with another person for some honor or preferment. As if he were solely interested in the common good, he will begin to plant in the minds of those on whom the preferment depends seeds of doubt and mistrust of his future competitor. He will say nothing when the actual choice is about to be made; he has done his work, and done it so long before that no one is likely to think he was trying to advance himself when he pointed out weaknesses in another.

A sly person will, either before or quickly after doing something wrong, take elaborate precautions to see to it that either somebody else is blamed for his wrong-doing, or that his action will appear to have been good instead of bad. He is a master at creating alibis, diverting suspicion, focusing attention on others when he needs to be forgotten.

A sly person will, by deftly planted suggestion, by indirect statement, by innocent questions, even sometimes by apparent denial, so influence the minds of others that he will receive credit and praise for what others have accomplished.

Slyness is not to be confused with sensible prudence and precaution. What makes it a mean character trait is the fact that those afflicted with it seek by crafty means to get what they do not deserve or to avoid punishment that they do deserve. Once a person has been caught using sly tricks in this way, it is most difficult either to love or to trust him.

The opposite of slyness is sincerity and candor. Nobody really dislikes a person who does wrong, admits it openly, and says frankly that he'd like to escape the consequences. Nor a person who expresses his ambitions openly and uses open and candid means of realizing them.

Unknown God

You say you don't know how to meditate? Don't know what meditation means? If you read this article slowly, you will have made your first meditation.

M. J. Huber

IF YOU EVER save somebody's life at the risk of your own, you may have a medal pinned on you by some organization or other to reward you for your efforts. People may talk about you with praise and admiration; the papers may carry the story in words and pictures; you may get into the newsreels or be asked for a testimonial for a breakfast food. But if you should ever help to save somebody's immortal soul, for example, by calling a priest to help a dying sinner make his peace with God, you would never expect any individual or organization to hang a medal on you.

Why?

It could be because people look upon the saving of a soul as something that can never be fittingly rewarded here on earth, neither by the presentation of a medal nor by the bestowal of a fortune. But I do not think that is the reason. Again, it could be because people are more interested in bodily life than in the soul; more impressed by the saving of a life than by the saving of a soul. They forget that when you help to save a man's soul you save his life for all eternity.

Again, people like to talk about, hear about, read about the things they are interested in. When several persons join in conversation, they talk about anything; from the sun to everything under it. But when was the last time you heard yourself or anybody else speak openly about God and His dealings with man-

kind; about the soul; or the saints; or the real meaning of Christmas; or about any of the feasts or holydays on the church's calendar?

Make a quick mental survey of the books, newspapers, magazines which you read and which you see others reading, by preference, and see what percentage of that reading matter treats of topics that can even remotely benefit your soul.

Well, if we don't talk about or read about God and His world, is it because we are not interested? Is it because we feel that it is not necessary to talk about God, or think of Him, since we seem to be getting along rather comfortably without doing so? Or does talking about God and the soul mean about the same as speaking in a foreign language, using words that have no meaning?

If we have been placed in this world to know God, to love Him and to serve Him so that we may be happy with Him forever in heaven, how much have we accomplished towards fulfilling this duty and destiny if we are practically speechless and thoughtless when there is occasion or opportunity to think about God or to say a few words about Him to someone else?

On one of his missionary journeys the apostle St. Paul spoke to the learned men of the Greek city of Athens and said to them: "Passing by and seeing your idols, I found an altar also, on which was written: 'To the unknown god'. What, therefore, you worship without knowing it, that I preach to you."

In every Catholic church there is an altar, and upon that altar, within the tabernacle is God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, to a great part of the world is, in all truth, an unknown God. If someone completely ignorant of Catholic belief would walk into one of our churches and see the little flame of the sanctuary lamp keeping watch beside the altar, he would not understand its meaning. If he would come into the church while the blessed sacrament is exposed for adoration in the monstrance above the altar, he might wonder what that little white disc is that rests in a sort of golden stand there upon the altar. Truly, he would be looking upon someone who to him is an unknown God.

We can imagine how great his astonishment would be if he were told that the little white something in its frame of gold is the great God of heaven and earth; that it is Jesus Christ who came down from heaven to live with His creatures here upon the earth; that He became man while He remained true God; that this is the God who walked through the holy land curing the sick, cleansing the lepers, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb and life to the dead, while to sinners He granted the healing forgiveness of their sins. If this stranger to Catholic belief were told all this and that this God of power and goodness is now concealed beneath this film of apparent bread, he might at first smile at what he would consider our simplicity of mind and then repeat what the Jews said when Christ promised them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink: "This is a hard saying and who can believe it?"

Yes, we know that without the divine gift of faith no one can grasp the tremendous truth that God has hidden himself under the appearances of bread so that He might give strength to our souls

and remain always with us upon the altar. But with the gift of faith all becomes easy. We whom God has blessed with that gift of faith believe that Jesus Christ is truly on our altars. Why? Because He who is God has said so.—This is My body.—And we know that God cannot deceive us. God has spoken. We believe.

We do?

Do we really believe that Jesus, our God, is there upon the altar just as He is in heaven at the right hand of God the Father? Do we really believe that the same Christ who died for us on the cross and who will judge us at the moment of death is present in the tabernacle? Yes, we do believe it in a sort of broad and general way; we do believe it as a matter of habit; we take it for granted; we believe it as something that our religion teaches, because Christ has said it. But we do not believe it as we should.

We cannot deny that our life is fashioned, colored, influenced by the things we believe. If we believe that Christ, our God, is present in the blessed sacrament, what has that belief done in the way of fashioning or coloring or influencing our lives? To put it bluntly: does it make any difference to us, any difference in our lives whether Christ is present upon the altar or not? Once we get outside the doors of the church is He an unknown God to us? Is He, many a time when we kneel there half-distractedly during mass, is He even then almost an unknown God to us?

And while we are doing a little checking-up on ourselves, let us make the examination a bit more general. What good are you getting out of all the things you believe, all the things you are taught and hold as true in your religion? Is your life, because of your belief, different from the life of the actual pagans, un-

baptized persons, who rub elbows with you every day? Sometimes don't you feel like saying about the whole crowd, including yourself: "We're just a flock of sheep, each one trotting along with the crowd. We seem to have lost our way and can't find the shepherd." And He said one day: "I am the good shepherd. I know mine, and mine know me." Yes, He knows us, just as we are. But can we expect to learn to know Him during the few minutes we spend haphazardly in His presence during the week? And if we do not know Him, how can we find Him in the maze of crisscrossing roads we travel day after day? It is not surprising, then, to discover that our lives are being guided and directed and influenced by every fleeting whim and vain desire, by our feelings and inclinations, by the "I like it" and "I don't like it" way of judging things, and not by the rules we got from Jesus Christ, our good shepherd. The saddest part of it all is that many times we seem not to be disturbed about it in the least.

Oh, yes, Catholics still have the faith. It is not dead, even though some may say so. Catholics still believe in the power of prayer; but how often prayer becomes merely a hurried wiggling of the lips and tongue, a careless gesture tossed towards the face of God. Catholics still believe in the holy sacrifice of the mass; but the short and convenient masses on Sundays and the very much abbreviated sermons are becoming increasingly and alarmingly more popular. You know how in our churches the last mass, the eleven o'clock let us say, will get the biggest crowd. But make the eleven o'clock mass a high mass, which lasts a bit longer, and a very large part of the eleven o'clock crowd will get up an hour earlier to go to the ten o'clock, rather than spend fifteen minutes extra in church at the

high mass.

When we were baptized God gave us the gift of faith. But faith is not only a gift; it is a virtue. That means we must practice what we believe. We have a part to play. As St. Gregory says: "He truly believes who puts his belief into practice." And the great St. Augustine tells us: "You say, 'I believe.' Do what you say and it is faith." And in Holy Scripture we have that famous line that Martin Luther tore out of the bible because he didn't like it: "Faith without works is dead."

Now be honest. How often in our lives do we not act as though we do not believe in God? Offending Him, forgetting Him, neglecting our duties, doing what we know is wrong and not doing what we believe is right; and all because we do not take that religion and faith of ours along with us to our work and into our homes and into our social gatherings and amusements. We don't throw our faith and religion overboard; but we do find ourselves sometimes on the edge of not wanting our religion in our married life or business life, or in our company-keeping. More often we wrap that religion of ours into a neat bundle and lay it away on a shelf, as we do with our Sunday hat or shoes, for a handy future reference.

Let's narrow down the picture again and focus our attention once more upon our faith and the blessed sacrament, and upon one particular part of our devotion to the blessed sacrament. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is truly present in the tabernacle. We believe it. Then why are our churches always so empty except for Sunday mass when we must be there under pain of serious sin, or for some extra-special service like the forty hours or confession night or Holy Thursday or Good Friday?

The Liguorian

It is not at all necessary for you to spend ten hours a day on your knees; to be in church five times every day of the week. But I think it will do anyone a lot of good to look to the other extreme and ask: "How little am I doing in regard to this thing of praying? Where do I stand in living my religion? Surely I go to mass on Sundays, maybe a bit late once in a while; morning prayers about half the time; meal prayers when I see someone else say them; rosary at a wake, and how my knees hurt before it's over! I must admit that it all does not make a very large package, if I wrap up all my religion for a week and offer it to God." Oh, yes, I know there are many who do much more in prayer and action; but they certainly do not constitute the majority.

Isn't it true that sometimes you may be inclined to think: "Oh, if I had lived in times that were simpler, less complicated than the times and conditions are now,—perhaps in the time when Our Lord was on earth, when He was walking and talking with the people,—and if I would have had my troubles, how easily I could have gone to Him to talk it over with Him and ask Him for help with the sure confidence that I would be helped." That may be true. But if you just keep on saying that or thinking it, and rolling your eyes and sighing about it, you are just making talk; because the same Christ who healed the sick and fed thousands with a few loaves of bread is there on the altar. What's stopping you? And, really, it is easier for you to ask Him for favors now than it would have been during the days when He was on earth in the holy land. There are no crowds to struggle with, no distances to be traveled. He hears you as soon as your heart begins to speak, before your lips can form a word.

All you need do is to walk into the

church. An especially good time is the time when nobody else is there or very few others besides yourself, any time during the day, or perhaps on Sunday after the mass or sometime on Sunday afternoon; sometime when you may be feeling low or upset, or when you feel like taking it out on somebody, or when you are just lonesome. Why not tell Him how you feel? Tell Him your troubles, your difficulties, your problems, your sorrows, your mistakes.

He says to you: "Come to Me all you who labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you." Isn't that true anymore? Why, certainly it is. Why not give Him the opportunity to keep His word and His promise to you?

Go up to the front of the church and make yourself comfortable. You do not have to keep on kneeling all the while to say a real prayer. Sit down. Make yourself at home. You are with your best friend. Then begin to tell Him what you are doing with your life. For example: how much time you give to your work; how much time you spend in doing things for others, to help them and to make them happy; how much time you give to amusement and recreation, — to pleasure; how much time you are wasting in idleness, day-dreaming. Then tell Him how much time you give Him in a week or in a day. After that ask Him: "What do you think of my life, dear Lord?" And you just listen for the answer. For you will surely get an answer to that prayer, and very soon. There may be a bit of a scolding He will have to give you; some good advice; and before you know it, you will be praying as you never prayed before.

Praying! How do you pray anyhow? How do you ordinarily meet the problems that come along in your life? Especially when real trouble or sorrow or sickness or death pays a visit? Look

back. What did you do the last time there was serious trouble? That serious operation. That money problem. That member of the family who was slipping from the straight and narrow. That time death took somebody you loved so much. What did you do? Maybe you recited Our Father's or Hail Mary's or rosaries; maybe you just carried the rosary around in your hand while you held your head and suffered. Perhaps you had a mass offered; perhaps you asked others to pray; perhaps you lit some candles in church before our Blessed Mother's picture or statue. You spent days with this trouble and weight on your heart; you spent hours talking about it to your relatives and friends. But did you ever get right down to the very simple childlike business of taking the whole problem to Our Lord and letting the weight of your burden be shared and lightened by the strength of His Sacred Heart? Did you spend even five minutes in really talking it over with Him, heart to heart?

Why don't you try it sometime, even when you are not in trouble? See how simply it can be done. Our Lord does not want a lot of fuss and fancy words and pious feelings. Look at the soldier in the gospel who came to Our Lord and said: "Lord, just say so, and my servant will be well again." Simplicity. Confidence. The blind man: "Lord, that I may see." The leper: "If You want it, you can make me clean." Can't you do the same?

Take your problem to Him, simply,

with confidence and faith. Believe that He is your God and that He can help and wants to help. Who is there who cannot talk to Him in words like these: "Dear Lord, you know how low I feel, how miserable. Things have been going pretty badly at home lately, and I am having a tough time at work too. I thought I was going to get that promotion and a raise in my salary. But,—well, if You think it's all right, will You see to it that the promotion goes through? Mom has been feeling bad the last few weeks. Her heart is very bad,—you know it, Lord, and she may go any day. Will You, please, let it happen when somebody's around so that she'll have the priest with her as she's prayed for all her life? And, Lord, while I'm at it I might as well mention that I've been a bit careless lately about my prayers,—missing them and just rushing them along, and now here I am just talking to you,—but for once I feel like I'm praying—talking to You from my heart. Please, help me to pray oftener in this way, and help me to be a whole lot better than I am. Have to run along now, Lord, but I'll see You again,—soon. That's a promise, Lord."?

Have you ever prayed like that? Try it sometime. You'll love it. And you will begin to know God; and love Him; and serve Him much better than you have until now. And there will be some meaning in the words that until now may have sounded a bit empty: "To be happy with Him forever in heaven."

Expert Judge

To a priest who had just given a talk on marriage, one of his hearers said: "You can't appreciate the fine points and problems of marriage, Father. You have never been married."

"No," replied the priest, "I haven't. But I never laid an egg either, and I am a better judge of an omelet than any hen in the state."



Three Minute Instruction

The Blessings of Purgatory

Purgatory is a place of great suffering which can be relieved by the prayers and sacrifices of the living. But at the same time it is a place where there are compensating blessings. The thought of these blessings need not lessen one's zeal for helping the poor souls; it will, nevertheless, inspire the determination on the part of the living to escape hell, and to avoid even venial sins that so easily lead to mortal sin and the loss of one's soul.

1. The greatest blessing of the poor souls is the knowledge that their souls are saved, even though they have to wait and suffer before they can enter heaven. With the greatest gratitude they look back on their lives and realize how eternally important were the decisions by which they resisted mortal sin, or made a sincere confession or prepared well for death. It is true that they suffer keenly from the fact that they now know the infinite goodness of God and have to wait to be united with Him; but the fact that they know they will be united to Him is a great relief and even joy.

2. It is common teaching and Catholic belief that the suffering souls are permitted by God to know that their friends on earth are remembering and helping them. This enables them to experience the continuing joys of human friendship and love. At the same time it inspires them to use whatever power of petition they possess to pray for their relatives and friends on earth, to beg of God special graces that will help them to bear their trials and to save their souls.

3. The souls in purgatory acquire many new friends while they are awaiting their purification and readiness for heaven. It is most probable that they come to know other souls who met the same trials on earth as themselves; that they cultivate new friendships that will be enjoyed for all eternity in heaven.

No sensible person will be inspired by the thought of these blessings to aim only at avoiding hell while worrying little about small faults and sins. No sensible person is unaware that unconcern about venial sin is one of the sure ways of slipping into serious sin. There will be enough to atone for in purgatory, even if one battles vigorously against every fully deliberate venial sin.

Zooming to Success

The false gods of America continue to be paid their tributes of adoration in the newspaper campaign that is neatly analyzed here.

L. G. Miller

WANT TO ZOOM TO SUCCESS? HERE'S HOW!

With this intriguing headline the Chicago *Sun-Times*, always, like any newspaper, on the lookout for what might stimulate reader interest and increase circulation, recently inaugurated a series of how-to-get-rich-quick stories which might have been copied from the pages of Horatio Alger himself.

"Like to be a millionaire at 35?" the *Sun-Times* asked. "Or become head of an \$18 million corporation at 29? Or at 32 be the man the bankers ask for advice about economic conditions? This new series of articles will tell you how. The *Sun-Times* picked out six of Chicago's successful young men and asked them how and why they did it . . ."

Along with the first in this series of articles, in a special little box of its own, could be found the Golden Keys to the future," which, according to the young prodigies, are necessary for success. "They are not too difficult to follow," chirped the newspaper, "They may even be foolproof."

1. Get an education.
2. Decide what you want out of life.
3. Find your field of interest.
4. Get experience in that field.
5. Get a job with the best outfit in that field.
6. Don't allow yourself to be pigeonholed too early.
7. Take advantage of your lucky breaks.
8. Get along with people.

9. Carry a spare stomach and an extra set of nerves.
10. Work . . . work . . . work . . .

Much of this advice, rightly understood, is excellent. What we wish to discuss in a somewhat critical spirit is the central idea or assumption that lies behind it.

The impression intended for the avid reader by such articles, of course, is that he too can become a millionaire; all that it takes is his close application to a few simple rules. For years this was a widespread American delusion. It was fostered by the Horatio Alger success stories, wherein a poor lad in the course of a hundred-page narrative rises from the depths to the heights, merely on the strength of his native honesty and industrious habits. It was abetted by the millionaires of each succeeding generation, some of whom used it as a means of shoring up their own complacency. "Every man can become a millionaire in this great land of free enterprise," they argued, "therefore don't disturb *me* in the possession of my hard-earned cash." It is a delusion one might have thought was decently interred some years ago, about the time of the great depression. But optimism springs eternal in the breast of the average American, and the *Sun-Times* has chosen to play upon it for all it is worth.

Our considered judgment on the idea behind these articles is that it is both unrealistic and unchristian. Here are a few footnotes on a stand which at first

sight may seem to be somewhat radical.

First of all, the Plan for Universal and Unlimited Success is unrealistic because obviously in the very nature of things only a comparatively small number can attain the heights. At the very top of industry there is room for only a select few; certainly it is axiomatic that not everyone can be an executive, somebody has to drive the trucks and puddle the steel and package the cornflakes. Even apart from the fact that special talents are required, it is becoming more and more clear that the industrial resources of our country are not capable of infinite expansion.

With regard to the necessary talents, it is equally true that a great number will be unable to reach the top simply because of a lack of aptitude. There is no disgrace for such as these in the fact that they have been given one talent, and not five. God still rules the world, and He dispenses His gifts as He sees fit. If He has given only one talent to a man, He will not hold that man accountable for not having five, and indeed the man with one talent who uses it well is far more acceptable in His sight than the man with five talents who squanders them upon trivialities.

Any other approach to the problem, we contend, is unrealistic, and can only breed envy and jealousy in the hearts of those who are less favored by nature if they try to gauge their success by the shallow standards of the world. And envy and jealousy in turn breed disillusionment, unhappiness and discontent, poor substitutes, certainly, for "success".

We do not say that a man should not try to advance himself in his work by using his talents to the best of his ability. He owes such efforts to himself and to his family. We contend only that he should join to his efforts a cer-

tain readiness to accept God's will in whatever it ordains.

The success-unlimited approach to life is not only unrealistic, but it seems to us to be entirely unchristian. Quite obviously these *Sun-Times* articles and others like them are based on the principle that success in life is synonymous with becoming rich and famous. But in the comprehensive advice on this business of living which was given by Christ, the founder of Christianity, there is no mention either of riches or fame as entering into the definition of a successful man in the eyes of God. Rather the reverse is true.

Christ indeed had some rather strict views on the possession of riches, and He did not hesitate to give utterance to them. He would have been rich Himself, if riches had been necessary for genuine success, but instead he gloried in his continued great poverty. In His way of looking at things, the possession of wealth might easily be a great hindrance in the business of saving one's soul.

On one occasion He gave to a certain rich man a special invitation to follow Him. The young man, thinking of his many possessions, became sorrowful and turned away. Thereupon Christ said:

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

It is not because the possession of wealth in itself is bad that the Master spoke thus; it is because all too often, when a man becomes rich, he begins to look upon himself as independent not only of his fellow men, but even of God. It does not take much experience of human nature even in our own day to realize that danger.

Certainly, then, it is entirely unchristian to bend one's whole and undivided efforts to the acquisition of what is entirely secondary to the chief purpose in life, and may even prove a great obstacle in the fulfilling of that purpose. "What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?"

In answer to the question posed by the *Sun-Times*: "Want to zoom to success?", our answer surely would be yes. But then immediately we counter with a question of our own: "What is success?" According to the Christian scheme of things, that second question must be answered thus:

Success does not consist primarily in becoming rich or famous in the eyes of the world. These are only secondary and as it were accidental characteristics, which may be attained by a few, but in the very nature of things will never be reached by the vast majority. And the few who attain them will not find them very satisfying.

Success rather consists in recognizing our purpose in life, that we have been placed on earth to know, love and serve God; and in acting upon that knowledge by the unselfish and patient fulfillment of whatever duties and responsibilities, be they humble or great, devolve upon us in the providence of God.

One who follows such a program of living, when he comes to die, will have the consolation of knowing that, although he may never have risen to the position of chairman of a bank board, he has not at least wasted his efforts and his energies upon the pursuit of what by its very nature is ephemeral. He may not have much of an account in the First National Bank, but he has wealth beyond measure in the only bank that continues to pay interest in eternity.

We are absolutely certain that when a man is on his deathbed that kind of success, or the pitiful lack of it, will be the only concern that occupies his thoughts.

Suggestion for a New "Internationale" Hymn

Verse: Oh, sick am I of the Sickle,
The Hammer has cured a ham.
But Stalin took my God, and so,
At least, I won't be damned.

Chorus: I'm glad I can't be damned, my boys,
Right glad I can't be damned.
I stole the light from childrens' eyes.
(Thank God), I can't be damned!

Verse: The Soviet bright Dynamo
Has blood upon its wheels.
I thought that just the flags were red,
But this darn stuff congeals.

Anyway, I'm glad I can't be damned, comrades,
So glad I can't be damned.
The light is fled from Peggy's eyes.
Dear God, I won't be damned?

F. M. Lee

DEEP IMPRINT

D. J. Corrigan

The catechism states that baptism imprints an indelible spiritual mark on the soul. I sometimes wonder whether this sacrament does not, in the case of a baby baptized but not reared in the faith, also leave a natural, or supernatural, yearning for the truths and consolations of the true religion in the soul.

Some years ago a priest was summoned to visit a non-Catholic man, past middle age, who was dying of a painful cancerous ailment. He had previously become acquainted with the man's non-Catholic wife when she had been a patient in a St. Louis hospital.

The sick man welcomed the priest warmly, and he in turn did what he could to console and encourage him. In the course of the conversation he asked the patient whether he had ever prayed, adding that God is our only hope in afflictions that doctors and medicines cannot cure. The non-Catholic's answer was startling:

"Father," he said, "I have never prayed in my life."

"Well," suggested the priest, "would you be willing to repeat some prayers after me?"

"Gladly," said the man marked for death.

They said, slowly, phrase by phrase, one after the other, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed—the Catholic favorites—and especially the act of contrition. The man's eagerness for the prayers was intense. Then the priest asked whether there was any chance that he had ever been baptized. The man did not know, but his aged mother, sitting in a rocker near the corner, spoke up:

"Yes, he was baptized."

"In what religion?" asked the priest.

"In the Catholic," replied the old woman.

At this the priest turned to her. "But you yourself are a Methodist," he said. "Are you sure he was baptized a Catholic?"

"Yes," she answered. "For I held him in my arms while one of the Sisters baptized him. When he was one and a half years old, he became very sick and we rushed him to old St. Mary's hospital. The Sister thought he was dying and asked me to let her baptize him."

"Then you are a Catholic," said the priest to the man. He gladly received a brief course of instructions and a few weeks later he died, strengthened by the light of faith and the grace of the sacraments.

The Sister at St. Mary's probably soon forgot the child she had baptized in danger of death. But undoubtedly there is one in heaven who will never forget her.

Incident In Heidelberg

Reminiscences of the first happy days following upon the end of the last war in Europe, when little things began to take on importance once more.

E. F. Miller

WHEN THE late great war came to an end in the European theatre of operations, there was a massive shifting of troops from one sector to another in Germany. The reasons for this were never made completely apparent to the men in the ranks. Perhaps the most important was the fact that many of the troops who had served overseas for a long time had priorities on going home. As these troops moved toward the ports in the west, other men had to be called in to assume their positions as security police over the defeated people. There was, naturally, considerable suspicion abroad that the broken enemy might rise any minute and start the war all over again.

In the course of the shifting back and forth, my unit found itself in Heidelberg, a magnificent city on the banks of the Neckar river, which had almost completely escaped destruction from our guns. True, report had it that the Germans themselves had destroyed the historic and beautiful bridges that spanned the river every few blocks, in the hope that thereby the forward motion of the attacking troops would be slowed down. But the destruction was futile, for it took but a few hours for the erection of pontoon bridges to take the places of the ones that had been blown up. By the time the temporary bridges were in place, the Germans realized that further resistance was in vain; and so they and their city gave up.

Thus, Heidelberg did not meet the

fate of Wurtzburg, Munich, Nuremberg, Berlin, and countless other cities of size and distinction that labored under the delusion that a better day would dawn in spite of the shells and bombs that systematically tore their buildings and people to pieces. Although we were sad on leaving the region of the Alps (that's where we were when the last shot was fired), we were willing to settle for a place that at least had roofs instead of rubble to protect us against the weather.

The first task of our billeting officers, on arriving in Heidelberg, was to find a house for the officers and a shelter for the soldiers. It would have been impossible for them to find houses and individual rooms for all the privates and non-coms in view of the fact that there were more than a thousand men in the unit. So, the best way to settle the problem was to find a house for the officers and a shelter against rain and snow for the soldiers.

It did not take long to find the shelter. It turned out to be an old school building. Who is the soldier who has not slept in an abandoned school building a thousand times in the course of his fighting a war? As a piece of steel flies towards a magnet, so do those in authority fly towards school buildings when they want to get their men away from the outside. With a sigh of resignation our soldiers dragged their sacks into the musty classrooms, spread them out on the floor between

The Liguorian

and around the desks, and prepared to make the best of what might be their last encampment on foreign soil.

The house that was finally selected as a fitting headquarters for the officers of our unit was no ordinary house. It was of three stories, with carved and ornamented woodwork outside and within. The basement housed a garage, a modern laundry room, emergency living quarters, a wine compartment, and space for the heating equipment. The attic compared favorably with the downstairs of most middle-class homes in America, though it was originally intended only for the servants.

But it was the first floor that captured my eye. Rugs so thick you could go to bed in them covered the floors; expensive lamps stood in corners; tables in restrained abundance were just where you would want to find them; the walls were lined with books in German, French, Italian and English, but singularly lacking in even so much as a pamphlet on Nazi ideology; a grand piano stood proudly in the center of the drawing-room, while off to the side there was a combination radio-phonograph, almost completely surrounded by shelves of classical and operatic records. The officers decided that the place would do.

There was only one small difficulty that stood in the way of our immediate requisition of the newly-found treasure, and that was the fact that it was occupied at the moment by the owner. He was a banker-president of the bank of Heidelberg, no less, who had served a term in the German army as a major, but who was now mustered out and intended to settle down with his bank and his family, to strengthen the one and to enjoy the other. His intentions were good; but his chances of carrying out his intentions were not good at

all. In fact, he was told briefly and politely that he and his family would have to go. *Aber wo?* Where he would go was not the problem of the American officers. The only requirement of him was that he go, that he clear the premises of himself and his family. He could have until nine o'clock the following morning to be on his way.

The major did not argue the point. Indeed, he smiled a bit as the ultimatum was laid down, shrugged his shoulders and turned away with the words, "*C'est la guerre.*" Some of the officers did not know what the words meant, but they took them to denote acquiescence in the demand; and that satisfied them no matter what language it was made in. Perhaps the German was so ready to comply because he had had some experience in the same sort of business when his side was ahead. Who knows? At any rate he moved out; and the next morning at nine o'clock there was not a sign of him or his family any place in the neighborhood. He took nothing with him of the house-furnishings beyond that which he could carry in his hands. To all intents and purposes he might have driven out into the country for a picnic, or dropped down to the corner drugstore for a package of cigarettes. The doors of his home were left unlocked, the contents of the pantry undisturbed and the clothing in the closets unmoved. It was as though he expected to be back in a very short time.

The room that was assigned to me had formerly been the nursery, with many of the surroundings of infancy still in evidence. The walls were brightly painted with gnomes and fairies, and a crib stood next to one of the walls. There were rattles and toys scattered about as though ready for instant use. Fortunately there was a man-sized bed

The Liguorian

in the place or I would have had to go back to the floor again. It did not really make much difference, though, whether I had a room in the gorgeous house or not, for, being the only priest in the unit, I would have to spend practically all my time in the quarters of the enlisted men, hearing their confessions, saying Mass for them and administering the other services of the Church that were so necessary if the period between the war's ending and the home-coming were to be properly gapped. Nor did it take me long to find out that in the very section of the city in which we were bivouacked were many other troops who had no priest at all. I would have to take care of them too.

Anyone who has lived in Heidelberg knows that the institution which dominates the city is the famous university that bears the same name. It comprises many buildings both modern and ancient, the modern resembling in some respects their counterparts at American universities, and the ancient built up in fortress-like proportions with six-foot-thick walls and doors like giant openings into caves. The combination of the old and the new in architecture, and the picturesque setting of the various class rooms, dining rooms and dormitories in the midst of the thickly wooded hills and on the shores of the tranquil Necker river make the university one of the most beautiful in the world.

We were told that it was in this university especially that the Nazi theory was propounded and defended during the days of Hitler's rise to power. Therefore, the first job of the military government was to de-nazify the place before anything else was done. When the fumigation was completed, the university was empty of both professors and students. Thereupon, an American bat-

talion of soldiers moved in and made itself at home. One could hardly hope to find either in peace or in war a more comfortable billet in which to live. Vast rooms which for centuries had been the studies of learned professors now became the offices of unlearned officers. Artistically carved sleeping quarters that had been designed in the middle ages and in which duels and other deeds of darkness had been hatched now became the barracks for men in khaki who had only one scheme to hatch, and that was how they could return to their homes more rapidly than the demobilization program could permit.

I had not been in the city very long before I was invited to attend a function in the administration building of the university at which some visiting dignitaries were to be feted. Not only were they to be feted, but they were also to be wined, if wine could be found for the occasion. My invitation told me that, if I had any spirits in my luggage, I was to bring the same along. One could not serve water to a guest, especially now that the war was over.

It so happened that shortly before this time the officers of my unit had been issued a ration of gin, in case an epidemic of colds or flu should break out and no certified specifics could be found soon enough to destroy the germs. Some soldier had come to my quarters with the bottle that had been allotted to me. There was no label on it, and no indication beyond what the soldier said that it really was gin. I smelled it with no recognition of the odor that flowed from the neck. Then I put it away for future reference. The future reference was now at hand.

Having dressed up in all the military finery that I could locate amongst my meagre impedimenta (it was the first time in almost three years that I had

The Liguorian

occasion to wear anything but clothes that would suit the purposes of war; consequently I had some difficulty in finding such fancy pieces of apparel as are proper to social functions), I wrapped my unlabeled bottle of gin in an old copy of the army newspaper *Stars and Stripes*, and set out in my jeep for the place of rendezvous. The evening was bright with stars, as I recall it now, and *frauleins* arm in arm with American soldiers were strolling along the greensward that flanked the placid river. I parked the jeep before the front door of the towering building of our meeting. I dismounted, smoothed out the battered crease in my pinks, took a firm hold on my bottle of gin and with eyes forward entered.

I found myself in an archway that led into a large and brilliantly lighted and gorgeously appointed lobby. But the lights and the appointments were no more brilliant and gorgeous than the company that stood about in carefully studied poses. There were plenty of colonels there, plus a general or two. I knew at once that this was not my party. My invitation had said that I was to go to the second floor, to room 264 or something. Undoubtedly these people down below were something else, something that had nothing to do with me. But I had to pass through the lobby to get to the staircase at the other end. Now, if there was one thing that I was not afraid of, it was a colonel. And generals? They were my meat. I took off my cap and started through the company.

Let it be noted well that the floor over which I was treading at the correct marching pace of about 114 steps a minute was made of some hard composition that I immediately perceived to be without give or pliability. This fact offered me no forewarning of what

was about to happen. Around me sounded the buzz of polite conversation; above me hung the flaming chandeliers; below me lay the relentless floor. Nor was anyone paying me the least attention. I was merely one of those chaplains who had slipped by the military police in order to do some boosting of morale. Most likely I had a bundle of Testaments in that paper I clung to so desperately under my arm. And then the calamity happened.

I had arrived in the exact middle of the floor, center-stage, one might say, when suddenly the weight under my arm seemed to dissolve. With a clutching motion I grasped my bottle—only to discover that no longer was I holding a bottle but merely that in which it had been wrapped, the battered and ancient copy of *Stars and Stripes*. Then I heard the crash; and I knew the worst had happened—my gin was on the floor, flowing in small and unworried streams between the broken and splintered pieces of my unlabeled bottle. The buzz of conversation ceased and the chandeliers swayed slightly from the ceiling. All this happened in the time it takes to wipe the brow of perspiration.

But I was equal to the occasion. Without missing a single step in my 114 steps a minute march I advanced towards the staircase, holding my paper now as though it were the day's edition. I did compromise to the point of looking a bit surprised, and even to turn my head a trifle in an effort to discover who had been so careless as to drop a bottle of colorless liquid on an immaculate floor and in the presence of colonels and generals. Men had been court-martialed for doing less. The culprit should be found and made an example of. Certainly no chaplain in the United States army could be guilty of so great an error. The crosses

The Liguorian

on the lapel of my jacket gleamed concurrence in this sentiment. The staircase yawned before me. Not hastening and not holding back, I shook my head in a gesture of rebuke (for colonels and generals to see), and disappeared within the saving depths. On the tenth step I sat down on my copy of the *Stars and Stripes* and collected myself. I still had the evening on my hands and some heavy work before me in the way of smiling and making comments on the weather. Well, they say that the devil swims on the top of liquor. If so, he

was exorcised that night. No visiting dignitary would become possessed of evil spirits through any fault of mine—unless, of course, water had the same effect as gin.

A couple of hours later my social obligations were complete, and I descended to the lobby of the building on my way to the jeep. The generals and colonels had disappeared. So also had the mess in the middle of the floor. I continued home and went to bed in my nursery amidst the gnomes and fairies.

Sign Language

The *Western Catholic* is the source of the following "Signs of the Times:"

Sign on a small office building in Washington: "Dentist and Wrecking Service."

Sign in a New York garment factory: "If your sweater is too big for you, watch out for the machines. If you are too big for your sweater, watch out for the machinists."

A hairdresser's sign in Windlesham, England: "We need your head to run our business."

Sign on bulletin board in front of a church in a Wyoming town: "Do you know what hell is? Come in and hear our new organist."

To these we might add the following, in a slightly different vein:

Advertisement in the Watertown (N.Y.) Times: "Special price on suits with extra pants to match. Better hurry, they won't last long."

Headline in the Pine Plains (N.Y.) Register-Herald: "Public Meeting on Local Dump Monday."

Roll Call

No doubt any state in the country could offer similar examples, but an enterprising resident of Wisconsin comes up with the following interesting names of towns, divided into the appropriate categories, all of which are in Wisconsin:

Automobiles: Hudson, Lincoln, Plymouth, Desota, Dodge, Franklin, Auburn. To which might be added Goodyear and Fisk.

Nations: Wales, Scandinavia, Belgium, Armenia, Denmark, Germantown, Sussex, Luxembourg.

Girls' names: Theresa, Verona, Lena, Lenore, Ruby, Myra.

Boys' names: Earl, Tony, Stanly, Rudolph, Alvin, Morris, Elroy.

Qualities: Luck, Superior, Unity, Victory, Freedom, Friendship, Endeavor, Loyal.

Culinary department: Morsel, Chili, Vinegar, Plum City, Blueberry, Rice Lake, Egg Harbor, Fish Creek, Cobb, Salter.

BIBLICAL PROBLEMS (29)

E. A. Mangan

Jonas and the Whale

Problem: Is not the story of Jonas and the whale a fable or a myth?

Solution:

1. Our strongest argument for the historicity of the story of Jonas and the whale is the fact that Our Lord seems to vouch for it in the Gospel of St. Matthew, chapter 12, verses 40-42, where he parallels the stories of Jonas and the Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon. In Our Lord's mind these stories seem to be accepted as historical facts, and He could hardly have made a mistake, since He was God.

The specific incident of the swallowing and the later ejection of Jonas by some kind of large sea-monster is used by Our Lord as a picture of His own death and resurrection. The incredulous Jews had hypocritically asked for a sign, and He tells them that they will be given only the sign of Jonas the prophet. "As Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." Certainly Our Lord would not have used this comparison if the story of Jonas were merely a myth or a fable or some kind of fiction.

2. As to the details of the story:

a. If we suppose that it was not a miracle, even then the story recorded in the book of Jonas is not ridiculous. To those who object to the story on the scientific ground that a whale could not swallow a man without cutting him to pieces, we might answer 1) that the word in the Bible need not be translated "whale"; it could be rendered "a large fish" or a "sea monster"; 2) actually there are sea monsters that can swallow men whole without killing them immediately; 3) this is true even of a certain species of whale. There are cases recorded and fully certified that parallel the incident in the book of Jonas, though they are rare enough to be termed most extraordinary.

b. The story of Jonas's experience is probably miraculous in some way. If, as the story seems to intimate, he was able to get up and travel immediately after the fish disgorged him, at least this part of the story is miraculous; in all recorded similar incidents the victims have been sick for some time and in two such cases were raving maniacs for weeks after their terrible ordeal. But there are miracles, and the same God who works them today could work them in the time of Jonas.

The Gambler who Won at Last

There are stories in history of every human passion being conquered by the love of God. Here is a dramatic instance of a gambler's transformation.

H. J. O'Connell

IN THE wine-reeking atmosphere of a cheap Italian gambling den, a tall, broad-shouldered young soldier tapped nervously on the table as the cards were dealt out. "This game has a devil's hold on me," he thought. "I can't give it up. And yet I can't win at it either. My luck's always bad." As he glanced at the cards dealt to him, his heart sank. He had little chance of winning with these. With a poor attempt at a brave smile, he watched the man across the table lay down the highest hand, and rake in the coins that lay in the center.

"Well, I'll have to stop now," the young man said. "That's every cent I have."

"Oh, come on, Camillus," one of his companions answered. "Your luck's bound to change. Haven't you got anything you can put up?"

"Nothing but my sword and cloak," he answered.

"To give you a chance to get even, I'll put up ten pieces of silver against them," one of the gamblers said.

Camillus hesitated. But he felt that the chance was too good to lose. His luck was, indeed, bound to change, and he might win back what he had lost.

"Done," he said. And the cards were dealt again. With trembling fingers, he picked them up. It was the worst hand he had held all night. Throwing the cards down on the table, he stumbled blindly out of the room, wanting to get away, anywhere that he might be alone

with his despair. He was penniless again, a soldier without even a sword.

As he left, his companions looked after him, one of them remarking:

"I never saw a young fellow with the gambling fever so bad as that Camillus. Why, I hear that when he was working in a hospital in Rome, he used to leave the sick unattended for hours, while he played cards with the other attendants. The director there got so angry that he threw him out, after finding a pack of cards under his pillow."

"That's true," said another. "You know, we talk in fun of a man 'losing his shirt.' But I actually saw Camillus lose his shirt in a game. He had to take it off right on the street in Naples, while the children stood around and laughed at him."

"Well, we didn't take his shirt today. All we got was his cloak, and he's probably warm enough right now not to need it," joked a third, as he dealt out a new round of cards.

None of these men sitting around the table ever dreamed that the young gambler they had seen stumbling out of the room in despair over his losses would one day be a great saint, renowned throughout the world for his charity to the sick.

Camillus, scion of the warlike family of Lellis, was born in southern Italy, May 25, 1550. His mother died when he was still a child, and under the care of his soldier father, the boy grew up

pretty much as a wild weed. Much more eagerly than to his books, he took to the games of chance so popular with his countrymen. Almost before he could read, he was gambling away his pennies at dice and cards. This passion, which cost him during his youth much shame and many a despairing hour, did not leave him until the day of his complete and final conversion.

Naturally enough, his father wanted Camillus to follow the profession of arms, in which his ancestors had won such renown. When the lad was nineteen, he had become so tall and strong that his companions gave him the nickname of "Christopher," after the big saint who had spent his life bearing travelers across a stream on his broad shoulders. Hence, father and son set out together to join the Venetian army in the war against the Turks.

They started on the journey northward; but on the way Camillus' father was taken sick and died. The young man himself received a wound in the leg that soon broke out into an ugly, festering sore. This made all thought of military service at the time impossible, and so Camillus sorrowfully turned home.

That the young soldier, however wild the life he was leading, was not without some generosity and goodness, is evident from an event that occurred on this journey. Being obliged to rest awhile at Fermo because of an attack of fever, he came in contact with the Franciscan Fathers there. Their kindness, and the example they gave of modesty and piety made such an impression on him that he resolved on the spot to become a monk. With this in mind, he went to Aquila, where an uncle of his was superior of a monastery, and told him of his intention. But this shrewd man, knowing the irregularity of Camillus' previous life, suspected that this resolve was only a passing notion.

With a smile, he told the young man:

"No, my dear nephew, I don't think you'd make much of a monk. Besides, your health and the wound on your leg would make you unfit at this time for convent life. I think you had better put the idea out of your head for the present."

That was enough for Camillus, whose ardor had already begun to cool. He decided to go to Rome, where he had heard there were skillful doctors who might be able to cure his leg. In the hospital of *San Giacomo*, he made an arrangement whereby he was to receive lodging and medical attention in return for helping around the wards. However, the young soldier did not prove to be of much use in the care of the sick. As soon as he had collected a few coins, he went back to his old habit of gambling. Hospital routine, meals, the pleading of the sick, meant nothing to him when he heard the call of the cards or dice. Added to this, he was temperamental and quarrelsome, taking out his irritation at his losses on his fellow attendants, and even on the sick. The director spoke to him about his conduct; but to no avail. His final dismissal came when the superior, after all his warnings, found a pack of cards under Camillus' pillow.

"You're no use around here," he said. "In fact, you're only a source of trouble and bad example. I think you had better be on your way."

Not knowing what else to do with himself, the young man went back to Venice, and joined the army there. For five years, he lived the rough, dangerous life of a soldier. Several times he came close to death from sickness, storms at sea, and the balls of the Turkish guns. He was lying ill of fever when the great victory of Lepanto was won, and had no part in the action. But he was active

in several other campaigns. During this time, neither his love of gambling nor his violent temper had abated. Once he became so incensed in a game that he challenged a fellow-soldier to a duel. The two were just squaring off for the fight, when the sergeant-major stopped the affair, saving Camillus either from death, or from staining his hands with human blood.

At the close of the war between Venice and the Turks, Camillus enlisted in the pay of Spain, and was sent across the sea to Africa. On the return voyage, the galley in which he rode was overtaken by a terrible storm, and obliged for three days to run before the wind. At length, the ship limped safely into Naples; but it was so damaged that it could no longer be used for war. Hence, Camillus and his companions were dismissed from military service.

As a result of his gambling in the army, he had not a single coin left of his pay. Nor could he find any employment in Naples, flooded as it was by returning soldiers. Hence, he took to the road with a companion, Tiberio Sanese, a man as penniless and disreputable in appearance as himself.

When the two reached Manfredonia, the proud young man, to his unspeakable shame, was forced by his need to join the beggars before the church door, and hold out his ragged hat for alms. At this lowest moment of his fortunes, the supervisor of a new hospital for the Capuchin Fathers passed by. Seeing the big body and strong arms of the young beggar, he asked him whether he would not rather work than beg on the street, and offered him a job in the construction of the new building. Camillus answered that he would have to consult his friend and companion; for they had thrown in their lot together. Tiberio would have no part in such

strenuous labor, and persuaded Camillus to take to the road again with him. As they were walking toward the town of Barletta, they met some messengers from there, and inquired how things were in the place. "Bad," came the answer. "There's no work to be had, and many an honest man is forced to beg." Hearing this, Camillus decided to return to Manfredonia, and go to work on the hospital.

Tiberio still shied away from the prospect of manual labor, and so the two friends separated for the time. Camillus walked back the way he had come, and applied for a job at the Capuchins. He was put at the back-breaking task of carrying stone, water, and lime for the building. More than once in the first days he was tempted to quit. But he stayed on in order to earn enough money to get some decent clothes, and make his way back to the army.

That was Camillus' intention; but Providence had other designs. It was God's plan to make him a saint, the founder of a great work of charity. One could scarcely imagine a more unsuitable person, from a human viewpoint, than this uneducated, quarrelsome, worldly young soldier. But it is God's way to use the lowliest instruments in order that His power may the more shine out in them.

One day early in February, 1575, when Camillus was in his twenty-fifth year, he was sent to the neighboring town of Castello di S. Giovanni to bring back a supply of wine from another Capuchin convent there. The Father Guardian of this monastery was a holy, zealous and forceful man. He must have heard of Camillus, and of the kind of life he had been leading. For, after the business between them had been finished, he brought the young man out into the vineyard behind the monastery, and

began to speak to him of the condition of his soul. His own earnestness, together with the grace of God, tinged his words with fire. Gently but firmly, he stripped Camillus' spiritual vision of its pride, obstinacy, and self-love. He spoke of the emptiness of all worldly things, and of the unhappiness that comes with sin. Then he began to build in the young man's heart a foundation of courage and hope for a new and better life. This talk with the priest was for Camillus one of those rare spiritual experiences that can completely change a man's mental outlook and the direction of his life.

Humbly thanking the Capuchin, he went back to his lodging with the burning words still ringing in his ears. Next morning, the Feast of the Purification of Our Lady, he started on his way, pondering deeply the truths that had been spoken to him. God's grace was working powerfully in his heart. People who passed stopped to stare after the young man riding on the pack-horse, between two huge skins of wine, who stared straight ahead, as though lost in sober thought.

Suddenly, Camillus felt within him a ray of heavenly light that pierced the darkness and confusion of his soul, and made him see with crystal clearness the sin and wasted years of his past, and the worthlessness of all save God. Dismounting, he knelt in the midst of the road, and wept burning tears of contrition for his ill-spent life. "O my God," he prayed, "why did I not know Thee sooner! Why have I been so deaf to Thy calls! Why have I so offended Thy Goodness! Forgive, Lord! Forgive this grievous sinner, and give me time to do penance and to serve Thee well!"

At that moment Camillus the Saint was born. True, he had a long, weary road to climb on the way to holiness; but never from that instant did his feet falter. In due time, when the work of his purification and penance was complete, God made him a priest, the instrument of grace to many souls. Eventually he became the founder of the Camillian Order, which even today carries on among the sick and dying the great lesson of charity learned from their founder, the converted gambler.

Agnostic's Prayer

Thanksgiving day is supposed to be given over to gratitude, presumably to God, for the benefits of life. Since the agnostic is not quite sure that there is a God or that we owe anything to Him, he must find himself in somewhat of a quandary as to how to give expression to the spirit of the feast. We therefore suggest this revised version of the well-known grace before meals for the use of agnostics:

Bless us (if there is such a thing as a blessing) O Lord (if you really exist, which we doubt) and these Thy gifts (we don't concede that these are thy gifts; after all we bought them with our own hard-earned money) which we are about to receive (correction on that; we aren't receiving anything, we take what we want) through the bounty (correction again; we don't know if God exists so how can there be any bounty on His part?) of Christ our Lord (we've heard about Christ, but we can't honestly call him *our* Lord; maybe he is, and maybe he isn't, we just can be bothered looking into it) Amen (that means 'So be it!' and sounds a little too dogmatic to us; perhaps we had better end our prayer—'So what?')



Thoughts for the Shut-in

L. F. Hyland

On Sick People's Prayers

L. F. Hyland

Shut-ins sometimes complain that it is very difficult for them to do much praying. Their physical condition interferes with concentration; or their souls seem to have dried up so that there is little meaning or comfort in even the most beautiful of prayers.

Oftentimes this difficulty stems from a narrow and wrong idea of prayer. Too many people think that praying means only saying a rosary, or reading out of a prayerbook, or reciting certain vocal prayers from memory. It is to be expected that such practices will not always be easy for one who is physically weak or ill.

There is another kind of prayer that is most easy for shut-ins and even relaxing for their bodies and minds. It is the practice of resting peacefully in the thought of God. In fact, the highest kind of prayer is really the easiest; it is that whereby a person merely learns to keep alive the consciousness of the nearness of God, with appropriate sentiments of love, adoration, thanksgiving and resignation.

External objects and surroundings can be used to facilitate this consciousness. For example, a shut-in, lying in bed, can look about his room. He can think of the fact that God is there, in every part of the room, always. He can look at the various objects in his room, and trace them back to God. The bed-clothing, made of wool which God fashioned on the backs of sheep, or of cotton which God made to grow from the soil, for the sake of man. The wooden furniture, fashioned out of noble trees which God first planted on the face of the earth for the use of man. The various medicines by the side of the bed, which were created by God in the form of plants, or chemicals in the earth, or even of the strength-giving elements in the bodies of animals for the health of man. Every visible object in the world can lead the mind of man back to the thought of God who designed it for the one who is His image.

The thoughts of the shut-in can pass outside his room to the great busy world. They can be conscious of God ruling His universe in every detail, guiding the destinies of mankind, even though so many are unmindful of His nearness. Permitting tragedies and accidents only for a reason that will be revealed in the end. Granting graces to all and only waiting for the graces to be seized to transform men into gods.

Such thoughts of God are great and efficacious forms of prayer. For God inevitably speaks to one who thinks of Him, and reveals secrets that bring the deepest tranquility to the human heart.

Portrait of Christ

Christ's Story-Telling Technique

Down into the homely incidents of the daily lives of His followers the Master went for examples and illustrations of the Kingdom of God.

R. J. Miller

THERE WAS nothing stiff or set or formal in Our Lord's story-telling. He might be driving home some fearful truth like the eternity of hell or the suddenness of Judgement day: some sublime revelation of the meaning of charity or of humility; but He always seemed able to begin with a simple familiar situation, with characters out of real life who in themselves were so ordinary, so devoid of "dramatic appeal" that one is forced to marvel, on analyzing the parable, at the consummate skill with which He built them into His own matchless forms of drama and power.

Even His manner of talking in relating the parables was easy and informal. One day, for instance, He began His parables on the kingdom of God with the question:

What is the kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it?

And after a little, He broke in again:

What shall I use for a comparison to the kingdom of God?

Surely the Human Being was never at a loss for words or comparisons, whatever the subject He wished to discuss; but this manner of speaking would almost seem to indicate some such difficulty! Only it was no difficulty on His part; it was nothing but part and parcel of His informal way of speaking to the crowds. He was asking these question not because He was at a loss

for words, but only in the perfectly natural way that a particularly gifted public speaker would use to arouse greater interest in his hearers.

So too on another occasion He said:

Does (a master) thank a servant for doing the things he commanded him to do?

And this time he answered the question Himself:

I think not!

Another time, when the tax collectors had asked St. Peter if His Master was going to pay His taxes, Our Lord said to him when they were alone:

What do you think, Simon? Do earthly rulers collect taxes from their own children, or from strangers?

St. Peter of course replied: "From strangers." Our Lord said:

Then the children go free! But we do not want to give them any cause for offence. So go down to the lake and throw in a hook. The first fish you catch, when you open its mouth, will have a silver coin in it. Take the coin and pay My tax and yours.

The whole incident is delightful; but our point here is the easy familiar way Our Lord introduced the little comparison of the King's family and "strangers" on the tax question.

The Liguorian

What do you think, Simon?

And, by the way, what a plain man-to-man attitude the Human Being showed to His "Simon"! Asking his opinion in that straight-forward way, and then telling him to use the miracle money to pay "My taxes—and yours"!

But aside from the manner of His speaking, Our Lord was informal too in the way He chose the subjects for His most sublime comparisons and parables. The sermon on the mount, for instance, was probably delivered in spring or early summer. The field in which the crowd had gathered round Our Lord was covered with summer flowers. So He said:

Look at the lilies growing in the field! They do not toil, they do not spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the grass of the field, which is today and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God clothes in this manner, how much more you, O you of little faith?

Gilbert Chesterton in his book *The Everlasting Man* can hardly contain his enthusiasm for the matchless art of Christ's descriptive power in this passage. Our Lord looks around, says Chesterton in effect, and selects seemingly at random the first thing that catches His eye for the purpose of His discourse—the flowers growing wild underfoot all over the field. With one swift phrase He raises them from insignificance to a grandeur beyond the greatest splendor in the thinking of the Jewish audience before Him, beyond "Solomon in all his glory." And with another phrase He casts away or tumbles down all this tower of magnificence in the face of another splendor, mysterious and towering higher still: "How much more

you, O you of little faith!"

It is the same with the characters He selected for His parables. Take for instance the parable of the rich man Dives and the beggar Lazarus. He was teaching a very stern truth, namely, the danger of earthly riches. Yet with what familiar figures He began, and how easy and familiar the type of dialogue He used in the story to bring out this truth! A beggar lying at a rich man's gate was a sight to be seen every day in Palestine; and the touch of "the dogs came and licked his sores" which Our Lord added to the picture, while no doubt true to life, still made it something painfully humble and ordinary.

There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen; and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the scraps that fell from the rich man's table, and no one gave him anything; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died and was buried in Hell.

And now begins a strange dialogue. The rich man "buried in hell" opens a conversation, so to speak, with Father Abraham in heaven. This is strange enough in itself, considering that, as Our Lord makes Abraham say to the rich man,

there is a great gulf fixed between us and you, so that there is no passing from our side of it to you, no crossing over to us from yours.

But stranger still, this familiar ex-

change of ideas between a dead man and some great personage in heaven suggests another very familiar device used by story-tellers in our own day. "The man said to St. Peter . . ." "and St. Peter said to the man . . ."! If ancient Jewish story-tellers used such a device, they would not of course have spoken of St. Peter, but naturally of "Father Abraham." At any rate, it is exactly the device used by the greatest story-teller of them all in this particular parable of the rich man and Lazarus; and He utilizes the (to us) familiar device with perfect ease and mastery, to bring out even the frightening truth of the danger of earthly riches.

And (the rich man) lifting up his eyes when he was in torments, saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he called out: Father Abraham, have pity on me; send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; this flame is torturing me! But Abraham said: Son, remember that you enjoyed good fortune during life, and Lazarus had just as much trouble. Now, he has his ease, and you are being tortured.

The rich man then begs Father Abraham to send Lazarus

to my father's house; for I have five brothers. Let him give them a warning so that they may not come in their turn to this place of suffering. Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the prophets; let them listen to them. They won't do that, Father Abraham, said he; but if a messenger from the dead come to them, they will repent. But he answered him; If they don't listen to Abraham and the prophets, they will be still unbelieving even though someone rises from the dead.

What a parable! When we study it

carefully, we hardly know which is the more staggering fact: on the one hand, the evident insistence of Our divine Lord on the danger of being a rich man in this world, or His stooping to make use of so ordinary and familiar a story-teller's technique to drive home His teaching on the other.

In other parables He was equally able to draw from familiar situations or characters in Jewish life some of His most momentous divine teachings.

Take for instance the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins. It teaches the stern need of being ready for a sudden death and Judgment Day under pain of being lost forever. And to us children of another age, the term "five wise and five foolish virgins" has a note of quaintness and artistry.

But Our Lord's "artistry" in this parable, to those who heard it for the first time, was nothing particularly quaint. It consisted rather in His ability to take a very familiar scene and raise it by one masterful stroke to a plane of everlasting significance.

A wedding ceremony in His day and age consisted of a procession of the groom and what we should call his "best men" from the home of the groom to the home of the bride, where she was waiting with her "bridesmaids." This procession took place in the evening; hence the bridesmaids all carried lamps. And after the meeting at the house of the bride, the entire party returned to the groom's home for the wedding banquet. Sometimes it happened that one or the other of the "best men" would be delayed in joining the groom for the first procession; the bride and her bridesmaids had to wait at home till they came.

On this very ordinary situation Our Lord built His parable. There was nothing "quaint" about it. The "five wise

The Liguorian

and five foolish virgins" were just ten ordinary girls who happened to be attendants at a wedding. It has even been suggested that the tone of the original parable would be best recaptured if they were called "the five smart and the five dumb girls". It is doubtful, however, if such a translation would do justice to the dignity with which the Human Being always spoke, even when relating such very ordinary scenes. It probably goes a little too far in the opposite direction, away from "quaintness". But it does serve to bring out the fact that His parables were never

merely "quaint", but always masterpieces of genius in the use of the most ordinary things.

Perhaps the idea here would be best reflected if we were to call it the parable of "the five wise and the five foolish bridesmaids". And even here it is a welcome sight, a revelation of the truly human nature of Our Lord, to see Him build a parable on the Kingdom of God around what would be the equivalent (in our modern usage) of a bridal party forming and walking down the aisle in church for the wedding ceremony!

The Pope's Army

The following incident is reported by Augusta L. Francis in *Context*, the British Catholic digest.

When the Americans liberated Rome in 1944, the soldiers were quite entranced by the colorful Swiss Guards, the small military organization which for four centuries has given military protection to the Pope.

One day, shortly after the liberation, an American gunner from the 88th Division walked up to the Swiss on duty at an entrance to Vatican City, looked critically at his Mauser rifle (1898 model), and said:

"When was the last time you fired that piece?"

The Guard grinned.

"I've never fired it," he said.

The soldier's eyes popped; then he shook his head sadly.

"Brother," he said, "that's a peculiar outfit you're in."

Despair

I cannot bind the straggling hairs of sin,
Nor primp my virtues into place.
Each closing moment seems
A more insistent mirror of my face.
So I will weep.
I will turn away and weep, and wait
Until the Hands of God
Come stealing, searching, like a blinded man's,
The lineaments of a face he loved,
And lost.

F. M. Lee



Side Glances

By the Bystander

The Department of Commerce of the United States Government has released its "Survey of Current Business" covering the year 1948, and it belies the ancient saw that figures are uninteresting. There are here presented some of most fascinating figures that any American can ponder. They reveal how Americans lived in 1948; how much money they received, how much they spent and for what, and how much they saved and gave away to good causes. The Golden Rule Foundation which is dedicated to raising the level of voluntary gifts to philanthropical causes among Americans, has sent us a synopsis of the report, with comparisons between the 1948 figures and those of some other years. Here are some of the contrasts.

The total national income in 1948 rose to the most colossal figure in history: it was \$226,204,000,000. The total national income in 1933, a depression year, was \$39,584,000,000, or less than one-fifth of what it was in 1948. Even in 1947 the total national income was 25 billion dollars less than it was in 1948. Wages and salaries paid out to Americans in 1948 amounted to \$133,108,000,000, a gain of 13 billion over 1947 and 105 billion over the year 1933. Into personal savings accounts Americans put 12 billion dollars in 1948, almost twice as much as in 1947, but only about one-third of what they saved in 1944, when patriotic appeals on the one hand and war-time shortages of things to buy on the other induced them to put aside over 35 billion dollars.

The relative figures that most call for comment, however, are those that tell what people paid for such items as alcoholic beverages, recreation outlets, and tips to

waiters, as against what they handed out for religious and welfare activities. Start with the figure of their total donations to educational, religious, and welfare causes, which include church support, maintenance and building of parochial schools and private colleges, private hospitals and voluntary funds for medical research and care. Toward all these things Americans gave \$2,772,000,000. Against this figure it is a bit sad to note that they spent more than 12 billion dollars for alcoholic beverages and allied items, or six times more than they gave to religion, education, welfare and charity. The sad part of this figure is the fact that so many Americans (and we don't mean only confirmed alcoholics) realize that they drink more alcoholic beverage than is good for them, and that if only the sums spent for imprudent and excessive drinking could have been turned over to religious and welfare causes, the ratio of twelve for alcohol and two for good causes would have been greatly improved. Recreation expenditures went past the 10 billion dollar mark, as opposed to the 2 billion for charity and religion. In tips alone Americans handed out almost half a billion dollars, proving how rapidly a dime here and a quarter there, given out with scarcely a thought, coalesce into a thumping total. And that total amounts to one-quarter of what Americans gave to the highest and noblest of causes!

These comparative figures awaken reflexion on the much argued plans for compulsory medical and hospital insurance. One of the strongest among many arguments against compulsory medical insurance is the fact that it would dry up the well-springs of charity, voluntary service, Christian initiative, in human hearts. If

The Liguorian

medical care, nursing, hospitalization, etc., are all taken over by the government, the most important and personal field in which Christian charity can operate will gradually become closed to individuals. The conviction will become widespread that, since the state has taken over the responsibility to care for all the sick of the nation, there is no reason why any doctor, nurse potential donor or mere lay Christian should concern or extend himself about them at all. The state, under such plans, will take out in taxes what people might have given in charity, the latter to the everlasting benefit of their souls and to the infinitely greater solace of the sick. This would all but remove charity from the language and hearts of the people.

However, the strongest argument in favor of compulsory medical insurance is the fact that private individuals and private organizations do not practice enough charity to take care of millions of Americans who need care. The argument is that government must take care of its citizens when private initiative cannot or will not, and that private initiative and charity obviously are not taking care of the nation's sick in any adequate degree. This would seem to be borne out by the figures given above. Voluntary contributions to all private welfare activities (not only in behalf of the sick) represented in 1948 less than one per cent of the total American income, while expenditures for alcohol represented almost five per cent. It is because of this low level of interest in and charity toward the sick that so many areas in the United States are without adequate medical services and hospital facilities. There are Catholic nursing Sisterhoods that would start building hospitals in all these areas tomorrow, if they could be assured that American support of those who freely give their lives to the care of the sick would not fail them. And no one can doubt that such hospitals would be far better places for

the sick than any that could be constructed by federal authorities and staffed and served by political appointees and salaried personnel. If we do not want the government to take from us our right to Christian initiative, personal charity, and voluntary service, we must show that these can do a better job of taking care of the recognized needs than they are doing now. That means giving better than one per cent of our income to such causes. Theologians teach that at least two per cent of one's income should be given in fulfillment of the divine law of charity. If all Americans approached that, they would more than double what they gave, out of love for their neighbor, in 1948.

Among professional fund-raisers for good causes, there is a controversy raging at the present time that has a bearing on this whole question. One group has been advancing the idea that there have been too many separate and local and competing drives for funds in behalf of good causes; they propose, therefore, that it would be well to create a national super-fund organization, which would campaign only once a year for all the causes to which people are now being asked to contribute by different organizations and at different times. Thus the Red Cross, the Infantile Paralysis Foundation, the anti-tuberculosis societies, the cancer research bodies, the Salvation Army, Boystown, community chests, hospital drives, etc., would all renounce their right to appeal to the public for funds into the hands of the super-fund outfit, which would make one grand appeal each year and then pro-rate the funds received to the various causes. The opposing group contends that such a national super-fund organization would not raise as much money as the separate appeals do, and would have many drawbacks that would hurt the good causes it was supposed to help.

The Liguorian

We agree unequivocally with the latter view. First of all, it would be impossible to draw up at the beginning of the year a listing of all the good and worthy causes to which people should contribute, and there would always be the danger that, in attempting to do so, a precious element of American freedom would be destroyed, viz., that of asking for contributions for a cause that has not been listed for the super-fund drive. But the chief argument, to our mind, against any such super-fund plan, is that it would diminish the average citizen's opportunities for charity and incentives to giving. Charity is a continuing obligation of all human beings; and it needs continuous reminders to be practiced. Our less than one per cent of charitable donations would sink to an even more shameful figure if only once a year people were asked to give freely to the relief of suffering and misery. What is really needed by all of us, and most of us will admit it even though we do grumble now and then

about the frequency of appeals, is more appeals, more reminders of misery, more disinterested groups coming to us with hands outstretched for a donation. What we need is not the depersonalization of charity through the medium of a vague and abstract super-fund, but flesh and blood appeals from those who are suffering with the suffering, and giving their lives while they ask us to give only a little of our money. The more local, the more frequent, and the more dramatic are the appeals to our charity, the more likely are they to lift us up to the level of giving we should reach, both in fulfillment of God's law and in gratitude to Him for the blessings He has poured out upon our nation. Only thus shall we be able to silence the voices of those who argue now that the government should take over every conceivable good cause, collect the money needed in taxes, and replace the spirit of charity and personal service with politics and greed.

Compensation

One of the Missionary Catechists reports the following experience in the official organ of that community, devoted to the teaching of catechism to poor and neglected children:

This particular sister was driving a group of children home after a class in religion when suddenly another car, heedless of traffic, backed out of a driveway just ahead.

Thereupon one of the youngsters exclaimed: "Of all the dumb tricks! And it's a woman-driver, too. Just what you might expect. I wouldn't ride with one of those woman drivers if you paid me."

Somewhat amused at this outburst, the sister slowed down the car, remarking: "Perhaps I should let you off here, since you don't feel safe when a woman is driving."

The horrified youngster suddenly realized the enormity of what he had been saying.

"But, Sister," he stammered, "I didn't mean you. You're different."

"I'm a woman. What do you mean, different?"

The boy was silent for a moment, apparently unwilling to retract his statement about woman-drivers, and yet realizing that here was a situation to be handled with delicacy. Finally he came up with an answer.

"Well, Sister," he said, "you're a Sister, and if I died in your car, I'd be half-way to heaven."



Catholic Anecdotes

The Meaning of a Kiss

The following is indicative of the important place allotted to Christian charity and the spirit of forgiveness of injuries among the early Christians.

A very ancient manual of worship speaks of the kiss of peace which is to be given during Mass to every member of the congregation by his neighbor.

While this mark of brotherly love was being imparted, the manual directs that a deacon cry out in a loud voice:

"Is there any man that keepeth aught against his neighbor?"

The Sinless Ones

"Monsieur le Cure," said a pompous French magistrate to his pastor: "I never go to confession for the simple reason that I never commit a sin."

"That may be," was the reply, "and if so, I am very sorry for you."

"You are sorry for me!" was the astonished reply. "Why so?"

"Because I know only two kinds of people who don't commit any sins: those who haven't as yet reached the use of reason, and those who have lost their reason."

The remark is worth pondering by some people in our modern day.

Memorial to a Newsboy

On a wall of one of the offices of the Extension Society in Chicago there hangs what at first glance seems to be a small picture, but on closer inspection reveals itself to be a one dollar bill in a frame.

The story of this one dollar bill is interesting. Many years ago when the late Bishop Kelley, then a young priest, conceived the idea of Extension

as a national organization to help the home missions and the spread of the church in the United States, he was on a train going home to his parish after a meeting in Detroit.

The newspaper had an account of the new plan, with a picture of Father Kelley, and a newsboy coming down the aisle of the car in which the priest was sitting, recognized him.

"You're Father Kelley, aren't you?" he asked.

"That's right."

"I see you've got a big job on your hands."

"Yes, I certainly have. I must try to raise a million dollars."

The newsboy whistled.

"That's a lot of money," he said. Then he reached into his pocket. "Here's a dollar to start it off."

The Extension Society is a big organization now, and Bishop Kelley has gone to his reward. But that dollar bill is still enshrined in a place of honor.

Preservative

In a discussion that once took place among a group of Irish clergymen on the question of how Ireland managed to preserve the Catholic faith through so many centuries of persecution, Archbishop McHale, who was called "the lion of Judah" in the days of Daniel O'Connell, ventured this opinion:

"I am an old Catholic priest, and I have lived all my life among our people. I know them perfectly. And I am persuaded that the Catholic faith was saved to Ireland by the universal custom of reciting the rosary as a family devotion every night during the long and awful generations of Protestant persecution."



Pointed Paragraphs

Everyday's Thanksgiving

People wonder, and have asked at times, why Thanksgiving Day is officially a secular feast day, i. e., one declared by civil authority and one that has no standing or recognition in the liturgy of the Catholic Church. Would it not seem, they imply, to be eminently fitting that such a feast be introduced into the religious calendar and celebrated with all the impressive beauty of the liturgy?

The answer is that there are so many expressions of gratitude to God in the daily Catholic liturgy and so many practices of thanksgiving incorporated in the daily lives of Catholics that it is scarcely necessary to urge the latter to thank God for their blessings on a specific day. Indeed, in the Catholic scheme of things, gratitude to God is one of the primary obligations; it ranks next to adoration among the purposes of prayer.

Who would think it necessary to devote one day out of 365 to expressions of thanksgiving to God, when in every day's Mass words like the following are placed on his lips:

"Glory to God in the highest . . . we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we give Thee thanks for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty . . ."

"It is truly meet and just, right and helpful to salvation, always and everywhere to give thanks unto Thee, holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, through Christ our Lord . . ."

"What shall I render to the Lord, for all that He has rendered unto me? I will take the chalice of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord.

Praising will I call upon the Lord, and I shall be saved from my enemies."

Catholics are taught from childhood to say after every meal: "We give Thee thanks, O almighty God, for all Thy benefits, who liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen."

Catholics are taught that in the morning they should thank God for the gift of a new day, and in the evening for the graces of the day that is past.

Catholics are urged to make one of their most frequent ejaculatory prayers the "Deo Gratias"—"Thanks be to God."

It is true that not all Catholics enter into the spirit of gratitude that is the daily breathing of their religion. For those who do not, even a secular reminder has its spiritual value, to lead them back into union with the great church for which every day of the year is a glorious thanksgiving day.

Widespread Ownership?

One of the current propaganda lines of the large corporations and monopolies in America is that they are really owned by the rank and file of the American people, because millions of the ordinary folk hold stocks in these companies. A National Association of Manufacturers' handout even makes it sound as if it is the lower middle classes and the poor who own the big companies, by asking, rhetorically, of course, this question: "Do you know that 90 per cent of all United States stockholders have incomes of less than \$5000 a year?" The impression may be gathered (though it is not in the words) that about 90 per cent of the stocks in

the big companies are held by these lower income groups.

How real and significant this kind of ownership is can be gathered from a breakdown of the ownership of stocks issued by the largest monopoly in America, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

There are 23,000,000 shares of A. T. and T. outstanding. These are held by 540,000 corporations and individuals. Of the more than half a million shareholders, the top 30 hold over one million shares, or, roughly, over 33,000 shares apiece, while the bottom 207,000 shareholders own only a total of 624,000 shares, or, roughly, an average of 3 shares apiece. Since A. T. and T. stock is worth, on the market, about \$150 a share, each of the top 30 owners averages almost 5 million dollars' worth of stock, while the 207,000 "little" people average about \$450 worth each. The top 30, mostly estates and investment trusts, receive over \$9,000,000 a year in dividends.

Or, to break down this monopoly ownership in another way, only 6 per cent of all A. T. and T. shareholders own over half the stock in this business, or almost 12 million shares, valued at about one billion, 800 million dollars. The largest of the 6 per cent owners is King and Co., a Wall Street investment trust company, which holds over 70,000 shares valued at about \$11,000,000.

These figures make it clear why an attendance of 300 at an A. T. and T. shareholders' annual meeting (out of 540,000 owners) is a record. What business has a man who holds a few hundred dollars worth of Telephone stock sitting in with men who hold eight or nine million dollars worth? Of course, as they say, he has a right to be there if he wants to; but he knows that his

voice will be very thin and very small.

The large number, therefore, of people who hold piddling amounts of stock in the big companies in no way proves widespread public ownership of big business; rather the small number who hold the huge amounts are the real owners and rulers.

On The Wrong Track

A commission set up several years ago by the British government to study population problems is now urging that the national health service provide free birth-control information to all married couples desiring it. And down that road, if England takes it, the nation will travel rapidly to its doom.

The arguments are reminiscent of another Briton's campaign against births 150 years ago. He was Thomas Malthus, who covered pages with figures to prove that England's people would be starving within a few generations because there would be over a hundred million of them on the tight little isle. (England has not yet reached a population of 50 million.) He, however, did not suggest birth-control; he merely urged marriage control and self-control in marriage.

The new economic experts of England come right out for providing its citizens with the means of sterilizing their marriages. An editorial in a large American daily, noted for past plugs for public birth-control centers, calls this "realistic," while it dubs religious arguments against birth-control "unrealistic" and "blind to Britain's economic necessities."

A whole book of arguments against the "realism" of birth-control could be written. It flouts God's authority over life and death, and God will not be flouted by a nation without demanding tremendous tolls of that nation. It

makes people morally soft, flabby, irresponsible, selfish, incapable of the responsibilities of good citizenship, and nations with flabby citizens do not long survive. It increases divorce, adultery, promiscuity, and other degenerative practices. In short, it diminishes respect for God's authority all down the line. And there are ample remedies for temporary population problems, if statesmen were interested enough in their states to apply them.

A hint as to one of the grave dangers of national health programs is also to be found here. The British Commission only recommends at present that birth-control material be given to those who want it. It won't be a long or hard step for the national medical authority to tell people that they must use the birth-control material under penalty. That will mark the end and doom of democracy, the rights of conscience, and the dignity of the individual human being.

No Escape

An advertisement in the personal column of a London newspaper some time ago read as follows:

"Can anyone recommend a cure for smoking for gentleman who is being impoverished by the cost of tobacco? No suggestions calling for will power, please."

This humorous and plaintive appeal is beautifully typical of what is wrong with many of us. "No suggestions calling for will power, please." We do not even advert to the fact that a "suggestion" is addressed, by its nature, to the will. We just go on begging and hoping and wishing that somebody would cure our troubles without asking us to do anything about them.

"Can anyone tell us how to avoid war? No suggestions calling for will

power, please."

"Can anyone tell us how to get along better with our neighbors? No suggestions calling for will power, please."

"Can anyone tell us how to give up excessive drinking? No suggestions calling for will power, please."

"Can anyone tell us how to give up lying, swearing, wasting time, gossiping, etc.? No suggestions calling for will power, please."

We need to see the humor of our own inefficacious desires for betterment. We all need to know that nothing, absolutely nothing, can save us from folly, except our will power, aided, as it always is, by the grace of God.

The Shock of Death

An inquirer, writing some months ago to the monthly magazine, *Hygeia*, posed the question as to how old a child should be before attending a funeral, and mentioned that she was severely criticized for not allowing her children, aged four and six, to attend the last rites of their grandmother. The answer given was that the child should be introduced to death gradually; "otherwise it may be such an emotional shock that it will give the child an unwholesome attitude towards death."

We suppose that there is something to be said for that solution from a merely psychological standpoint. Without exploring the point further, we find ourselves reflecting that it must create a great difficulty for the agnostic and the self-styled atheist when they are faced with such a problem in their own families.

A child by its very nature seeks direct answers to its questions. Let us suppose the mother of a child dies; what can the agnostic or the atheist father say? "Your mother is in heaven, and

there one day you will see here again"? But such a promise would run counter to his own convictions. "You'll never see your mother again; this is the end of her once and for all?" But that certainly would send the child into a "severe emotional shock." Indeed, not only the child, but the father in such a case is to be pitied if death means nothing more than an unmitigated tragedy.

As for the Catholic viewpoint, there is no problem really on the part of the child. The Catholic child brought up in a truly Catholic atmosphere, accepts the reality of heaven as naturally as it does the existence of its home. When death strikes close to it, the child may indeed be sad, but in our experience such a child reacts far more wholesomely than many of the adults who are immediately involved in the bereavement.

You need not worry about taking such a child to a funeral; in fact, in the face of death, you can well afford to learn from such a child the lesson of a truly Christian hope.

Film of the Year

Most heartily do we join with critics all over the country in attaching a "highly recommended" label to the French film "Monsieur Vincent", now making the rounds of our major cities. We honestly believe that anyone not completely caught up by the spirit of the world will find in it a vast amount of inspiration and spiritual strength.

Monsieur Vincent, of course, is none other than St. Vincent de Paul, the great French apostle of charity of the seventeenth century, and the film is a selection of episodes from his life from the time he began his work for the poor

until his death. Such a story might have been made as dry as the desert or as sweet as a candied yam, as has been, unfortunately, more than a little of the work done by well-meaning biographers of the saints. But this screen biography is different.

The acting, to begin with, is superb. Pierre Fresnay, in the title role, carried off an international award, and his supporting cast is without exception excellent. There is a healthy realism in the unfolding of the story and in the settings which are used, and none of the misplaced emotional claptrap and sugared sentimentalism which have characterized many a similar venture. Moreover, the dialogue (which is in French, but with English subtitles) fairly sparkles with wit (in its highest form) and that clear, cold irony at the foibles of the human race which is like a tonic to the spirit.

It is not often that movie reviews appear in these pages. In fact, even in regard to the so-called religious pictures emanating from Hollywood, our attitude is one of suspicion. Only too often the Hollywood version of a religious picture is a messy affair, made up of an inconsequential central idea, and varnished over with several successive coats of sentimentalism, false piety, and a watered down conception of God's relationship to man. Many of these pictures have received their just desserts from the critics, namely, a thorough and unmitigated panning.

The appearance of "Monsieur Vincent" proves definitely that a completely artistic production along religious lines is practical and possible. If Hollywood produces anything of the kind, we shall be among the first to acclaim it.

Sticking to the Last?

A sign on a shoe store in Easton, Pennsylvania:

"We doctor shoes; heel them; attend their dyeing, and save their soles."



Liguoriana



EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

Selected and Edited by J. Schaefer

THE LAST THINGS

2: *Purgatory (Cont.)*

The holy Council of Trent has made the following declaration: The Catholic Church teaches through this Ecumenical Council that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls who are there detained find relief through the suffrages of the faithful, and especially through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The principal reason for the value of these prayers and works of the faithful, according to the teaching of St. Thomas, results from the communion of Saints, and the union which exists between the Church militant, the Church suffering and the Church triumphant. For the same reason, St. Thomas argues again, the blessed in heaven can come to the assistance of the souls in Purgatory by their prayers, since they form with the Poor Souls one body, so that, as St. Paul says, if one member suffers, all suffer together with him. Hence each member should endeavor to aid the others, in virtue of the union which exists between them. Just as the Saints are ever solicitous for us and pray for us who still live here on earth, so also do they pray for the afflicted souls in Purgatory.

Even though the blessed are no longer able to merit for themselves, they can certainly do so for others. It is for this reason that the Church militant, in her official prayers, begs the assistance of the Saints and angels for the departed souls. For instance, in the prayers for the agonizing she begs the Saints and angels to come to their assistance. In another circumstance the Church recommends this prayer: "Omnipotent and everlasting God, we beg of Thee in Thy

goodness, that those who are now in the future life deprived of their bodies, may obtain pardon of all their sins through the intercession of all Thy Saints."

A very interesting question has been frequently posed by theologians and the faithful, as to whether or not the souls in Purgatory are able to pray for the living. Some deny that they can, basing their assertion on a passage of St. Thomas, which states: "The souls detained in Purgatory are superior to us in their impeccability, but are, nevertheless, inferior to us in the pains which they must endure. Hence, they are not in a state of prayer, but rather stand in need of our prayers." These authors, therefore, call it an abuse for the living to implore the help of the souls in Purgatory.

But it is without reason that this pious practice is called an abuse. For Cardinal Gotti, himself a faithful follower of St. Thomas, maintains that the Saint did not mean to teach that the souls in Purgatory cannot pray for the living: for it is one thing to state that they are not in a state of prayer and another that they cannot pray. For even though they cannot merit graces for others, there is nothing to prevent them from praying for themselves and for us, knowing as they do the love which the Lord bears them. Saint Bonaventure, Cardinal Bellarmine and many other authors are of the same opinion. Cardinal Bellarmine, for instance, remarks that, even though St. Thomas seems to teach the contrary, it is without convincing reason. For, according to St. Thomas, if the souls cannot pray

for us, it is either because they do not enjoy the vision of God, or because they endure extreme torments, or because they are inferior to us: but none of these suppositions are admissible in support of this opinion—for we ourselves do not enjoy the vision of God, many of us here on earth endure more severe torments than others and are in an inferior state of perfection, and still we can pray for one another.

We may even piously believe that God makes known to the Poor Souls our prayers for them; and hence, filled with charity as they are, they most certainly must pray to God for us. We read in the life of Saint Catherine of Bologna that when she desired a special grace she had recourse to the souls in Purgatory, and she was always heard; so much so that she attests to having received more graces through the intercession of these souls than she received through that of the Saints. Thousands of such examples are to be found in the lives of the Saints. St. Augustine states that the holy souls can frequently obtain knowledge of events here on earth from the angels.

Even though, however, it is a more probable opinion that the poor souls can pray for us, in our charity, we must always remember, that it is far better for us to pray for them than to request their prayers for us.

In the lives of the Saints, we read of many apparitions of the holy souls to persons living here on earth. St. Bernard, for instance, relates that the sister of Saint Malachy frequently appeared to her brother while she was in Purgatory; in the last of these visions, she was shown to him being delivered from her suffering by means of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Though such apparitions have been declared imaginary by many, they still cannot be

set aside altogether, because of the weight of authority of those who witnessed them, especially when they confirmed such mysteries of the faith as the resurrection, the immortality of the soul and the punishments or rewards reserved for men after death.

PRAYER

O Lord, I realize that I am charged with innumerable debts to thy divine justice, and that all the pains of this life would not be sufficient to punish me and to wipe them away. Nor do I dare pray to be preserved entirely from the pains of Purgatory. It is true, I burn with the desire of possessing you in heaven immediately, there to love you with a most perfect love. But it is only just that the expiatory flames purify me of the many stains with which I am covered.

O dearly beloved Lord! I do not fear the pains of Purgatory, for once there, I know that I shall be in a place where I will never be able to lose you, where I will always love you with all my power. It is the punishment of hell that I fear: there I shall not be able to love you, or rather, I will always hate you and be hated by you. Deliver me, I beseech you, from such a fate by virtue of the blood which you have shed for me with so much suffering.

My Jesus, grant me courage and confidence. The devil would persuade me that I have many times over lost your grace and your love, that I have no right to aspire to the happy lot of those who love you eternally and of being loved by you in the land of the Saints. But when I recall your Passion and all the graces which you have showered upon me after my numerous faults, I conceive the firm hope of loving you always throughout all eternity.



Conducted by T. Tobin

CATHOLIC AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

FRANCIS CARDINAL SPELLMAN, 1889-

I. Life:

Francis Joseph Spellman, son of William and Ellen Conway Spellman, began his life in Whitman, Massachusetts, on May 4, 1889. His early education was received in the schools of his birthplace and his A. B. degree from Fordham. After graduation he entered Propaganda Seminary in Rome, and was ordained there on May 14, 1916. Father Spellman's first appointment was as assistant pastor of All Saint's Church in Roxbury. For several years he was on the editorial staff of the *Boston Pilot* and also Assistant Chancellor of the Archdiocese. In 1925, Father Spellman was called to serve in the Secretariate of State of the Vatican. During his time there he translated various encyclicals into English and served as the English announcer at the Vatican radio station. When Pope Pius XI desired to publish his encyclical letter condemning Fascism, the young American priest flew the document to France where it first appeared. In 1932, Cardinal Pacelli consecrated him auxiliary Bishop of Boston, the first American ever to be consecrated in St. Peter's. Bishop Spellman succeeded the beloved Cardinal Hayes as Archbishop of New York in 1939. During the war he was appointed Bishop of all the armed forces. Pope Pius XII, his personal friend, bestowed the Red Hat upon him in 1946.

Cardinal Spellman is a prominent leader of the Catholic Church in America.

II. Writings:

As editor of the Boston Catholic paper, his writing career began. While in Rome two books of Monsignor Borgongini-Duca were translated: *The Word of God* and *In the Footsteps of the Master*. Most of Cardinal Spellman's own writing resulted from his extensive journeys as Bishop of the armed forces during the late war. *The Road to Victory*, *Action This Day*, and *Fruits of Freedom* are short prose works about his experiences during the war and reflections about the post-war world. *The Risen Soldier* is a poem with the theme that "the first battle is to be won in man's own heart."

III. The Book:

No Greater Love is a description of physical and moral conditions effected by the war and a proposal of the only adequate remedy—a return to the age old doctrine of brotherly love. This thesis is supported by many personal incidents of the Cardinal's travels through the war zone. Despite its publication in 1945, *No Greater Love* is still a timely book by a great American Catholic statesman.

NOVEMBER BOOK REVIEWS

Early Life of Mary and Joseph

Mary and Joseph. By Rev. Denis O'Shea. 404 pp. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co. \$3.50.

Most of us have felt the paucity of the details about the lives of the Holy Family, since the revealed writings mention only a very few facts about Mary and Joseph. Father Denis O'Shea has written a very factual reconstruction of the lives of the holy marriage of Mary and Joseph. In his preface he states: "This book can claim a certain singularity. It is the only considerable documented biography in English of Mary and Joseph. The work is historical rather than devotional: an attempt to reconstruct with all the wealth of detail possible the scenes and incidents in the lives of Mary and Joseph."

The author has collated information from vastly different sources: the Gospels, the apocryphal writings of the first centuries, early Jewish and Christian writings, the Talmud and recent doctrinal works. The result is a well-rounded picture of the lives and times of *Mary and Joseph*. Without accepting the apocryphal writings as completely true, he has used facts from them that are worthy of credence.

The book begins with the account of the ancestry of Joseph and Mary as descendants of the royal house of David. The Jewish ceremony of betrothal is explained so as to make clear the relation of Mary and her betrothed. Several chapters are devoted to the story of Zachary and Elizabeth with full details about the functions of the priest in the Temple. After the chapters on the Visitation and the birth of John the Baptist the book concludes with the narration of the wedding of Joseph and Mary.

This is a very interesting and informative book. In passing, it might be noted that the author maintains very strongly

that early Christian writings and art depicted Joseph as a young man and the beard was not added to his portrait until a much later date. Although the treatment is historical rather than devotional, a more complete knowledge of the events of the life of the Holy Couple will do much to add to the piety of the readers. All Catholics, religious and lay, will enjoy and profit from the reading of *Mary and Joseph*.

Origins of Our Modern World

Makers of the Modern Mind. By Thomas P. Neill, Ph. D. 391 pp. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co. \$3.75.

The nursery jingle of the six blind men of Indostan, each of whom felt a different part of the elephant and claimed that his description was the only true one, is a symbol of the confusion resulting from a too intense specialization of knowledge. This specialization has become a disease in our modern thought which has caused the ignorance of the fundamental nature of man and his destiny.

Makers of the Modern Mind is the effort of Doctor Neill to show the origins of our modern confusion. The eleven men chosen for study: Luther, Calvin, Descartes, Locke, Newton, Rousseau, Kant, Bentham, Darwin, Marx and Freud influenced our modern mentality, not so much because they were necessarily original and profound thinkers, but because they reflected the desires and needs of their times. From the distrust of reason by Luther to the sensual philosophy of Freud, modern thinkers have attacked reason, even when, in some instances, trying to reestablish its validity. The only hope for the modern man is in his knowledge of himself as a reasonable being, created in the image and likeness of his Maker.

Although this book is written by a scholar, it is not encumbered with the

The Liguorian

technique of the Doctor's thesis that would make it too complicated for the ordinary intelligent man. The style is simple; the doctrinal exposition is clear. *Makers of the Modern Mind* recalls the earlier work of John H. Randall, *The Making of the Modern Mind*. Doctor Neill's book is not as complete as the previous book and is more concerned with the personalities that formed the modern mind. Those who are interested in studying the development of the chaotic condition of modern thought will do well to read the clear and logical exposition of *Makers of the Modern Mind*.

The Life of Grace

The Mystical Evolution in the Development and Vitality of the Church. By Rev. John G. Arintero, O.P., S.T.M. Translated by Rev. Jordan Aumann, O.P. Vol. I. 358 pp. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co. \$4.50.

This is the first volume of the well known work of the learned Spanish Dominican theologian, Father John Arintero, the founder of the spiritual review, *La Vida Sobrenatural*. After many years spent in teaching, his superiors allowed him to use the last years of his life in writing. The present book is his most important work, and the first one to be translated into English.

The book is devoted to the explanation of sanctifying grace as the source of the inner vitality of the exterior development of the Church. Volume 1 deals with the general principles of the life of God in the soul; the succeeding volumes will show the development of this life in individual souls and in the Church. After a preliminary discussion of the relationship between ascetical and mystical theology, the author explains the nature of sanctifying grace as the deification of the soul and the resultant Indwelling of the Most Holy Trinity. The third chapter shows our participation in Divine activity through the infused vir-

tues and the gifts of the Holy Ghost; the fourth chapter details our growth by our own efforts and the infallible efficacy of the sacraments.

This is really a monumental work which will be better appreciated on its second reading. It is a very complete treatise on the nature and operation of grace. The lengthy title might frighten prospective readers, but the title does very clearly express the nature of the contents of the book. This volume is recommended to the attentive consideration of religious and laity alike. It is our hope that the other volumes will appear soon.

Model for the A A's

The Story of Matt Talbot. By Malachy Gerard Carroll. 101 pp. Dublin: Mercier Press. 8/6.

Matt Talbot would be a wonderful patron for the members of Alcoholics Anonymous. As a young boy and man he became a habitual drunkard who neglected his religious duties. He often pawned his second pair of shoes for the money to buy liquor. One time when he came home in his stocking feet his mother remarked: "So, they are malting boots into Guinness now, are they?" But the grace of God made him into a mighty man of prayer and penance who lacerated his body with chains and slept on boards. To atone for his previous disrespect for the Holy Name, Matt adopted the custom of tipping his hat whenever he heard the profane or blasphemous use of it.

This second biography by Malachy Gerard Carroll is written in an effort to visualize and dramatize the incidents in the life of Matt Talbot. Although this is by no means the definitive biography, it is, perhaps, the most interesting one to appear up to now.

The Sacred Heart

The Book of Infinite Love. By Mother

The Liguorian

Louis Margaret. Translated by Rev. Patrick O'Connell, 129 pp. Westminster: The Newman Press. \$1.75.

The Sacred Heart and the Priesthood. By Mother Louise Margaret. Translated by Rev. Patrick O'Connell. 224 pp. Westminster: The Newman Press. \$2.50.

The revelations of the Sacred Heart did not terminate with the death of St. Margaret Mary; several other chosen souls have been the recipients of the confidences of the Sacred Heart. Mother Louise Margaret, a French nun who died in 1915, was also given the commission to make His love known to mankind. Her special mission was to remind priests of God's special love for them. These two works, published by the holy nun, contain the revelations made to her. The Catholic Church has not vouched for the Divine origin of the doctrine, but has approved it as in harmony with Catholic teaching, and has allowed pious unions to be formed according to the revelations.

The Book of Infinite Love maintains that the coldness of men's hearts can be warmed only by the fire of Divine Love. *The Sacred Heart and the Priesthood* is divided into three sections: 1. the priest as the special creation of Divine Love; 2. the necessary conformity of priests with their Divine Model; 3. meditations on the love of Christ for priests. The words of these two books will inflame the hearts of those consecrated to God as priests. These burning pages reveal a soul filled with Divine Love and Wisdom.

The Divinity of Christ

Reason to Revelation. By Rev. Daniel J. Saunders, S. J. 241 pp. St. Louis: B. Herder Co. \$3.50.

In our age of unbelief it is necessary to establish the proof of the Divinity of Christ, even in the minds of Catholics. Catholics, at times, find it difficult to express in words the reasons for their belief that Christ is

the Son of God. The present book, based on the Latin text of Father Cotter, gives clear and logical proof of the Divine nature of Christ. After preliminary considerations on Revelation, Miracles and Mysteries, the author considers the authenticity of the Scriptures. The remaining chapters advance the logical proofs for the fundamental truth of all Christianity, the Divineness of its Founder. The book is written in a thorough, yet non-technical nature, that will appeal to Catholics and sincere non-Catholics alike.

Idea of a Catholic University

Blueprint for a Catholic University. By Rev. Leo R. Ward, C. S. C. 402 pp. St. Louis: B. Herder Co. \$5.00.

In some self-criticism American universities are asking themselves about their specific role in the American democracy. Hutchins and Adler have accused the universities of being confused with regard to their fundamental purpose. It is time for the Catholic Universities to pose the same question: What is their specific aim in education? Father Leo Ward, for many years a professor at Notre Dame, is well qualified to ask and answer this question.

The three parts deal with 1. The Birth of Universities; 2. The Nature of a University; 3. The Ideal in America. The origin and development of both the Catholic and the secular university give clues to their nature. Negatively, the author maintains that in the present chaotic state of society Catholic universities can no longer turn out mediocre, neutral, "half-hearted not-bad" men. The specific aim of Catholic education is to form the students to the Catholic pattern of thought and wisdom.

Blueprint for a Catholic University is a very stimulating discussion that should assist Catholic universities in finding their true places as universities and as Catholic schools.



Lucid Intervals

Hotel Clerk: "I hope you enjoyed your stay with us, sir."

Guest: "Well, the bed was too hard, the price too high, the food was bad, the service slow, there's too much noise, but I certainly enjoyed your ice water."

Doctor: "Mrs. Smith, your husband must have absolute rest."

Mrs. Smith: "Well, Doctor, he won't listen to me—"

Doctor: "A very good beginning, madam; a very good beginning."

It was Michael's first visit to the country, and feeding the chickens fascinated him. Early one morning he caught his first glimpse of the peacock sunning himself on the lawn. Rushing indoors excitedly, Michael sought out his grandmother.

"O, Granny," he exclaimed, "one of the chickens is in bloom!"

Two buzzards soared lazily over the desert when a jet-propelled plane zipped by them, its exhaust throwing flame and smoke. As it whizzed out of sight, one of the buzzards remarked: "That bird was really in a hurry." "You'd be in a hurry, too," said his companion, "if your tail was on fire."

Sgt.: "Sir, the bugler's missing."

Officer: "Where do you think he is?"

Sgt.: "I dunno—he just blew, sir."

"You look positively happy all the time," said the young man to the elderly spinster. "I always thought unmarried women were grouchy without a husband."

"Well, I have a dog that growls, a fireplace that smokes, a parrot that swears and a cat that stays out all night," replied the spinster. "What do I need with a man?"

Bill: "Does a man have more sense after he gets married?"

Joe: "Yes, but it's too late!"

Little girl (on a transcontinental train): "Mama, what's the name of the last station we stopped at?"

Mother: "Don't bother me. Can't you see I'm reading? Why do you ask?"

Little girl: "Because brother got off there."

Young Angus McTavish was observing his birthday, and his father decided to celebrate the occasion by taking him to a movie. He asked the ticket seller for one full and one half admission.

The ticket seller seemed dubious: "How old is the boy?"

"Well, this is his twelfth birthday," admitted McTavish, "but he wasn't born until just before midnight."

"When is the only time a woman is justified in spitting in a man's face?"

"When his moustache is on fire."

Do you remember the actor who played the part of Lincoln for so long that he actually thought he was Lincoln? He walked, talked, and dressed like Lincoln all the time. One day he was walking down Broadway, clothed in the cape and light hat of Lincoln's period. Someone pointed him out and remarked: "That fellow will never be satisfied until he's assassinated!"

Bride (proudly): "My first turkey."

Husband: "It looks swell, darling, what did you stuff it with?"

Bride: "Stuff it with? Why, honey, this one wasn't hollow."

FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS GIFTS

If you have read the definition of friendship set down in the column "Amongst Ourselves" on the inside front cover of this issue of The Liguorian, we feel that you will want to use the blanks below for some of your Christmas presents this year. You may advance your own subscription at the same time, if you include it as the third of three subscriptions, at a saving of \$1.00 to yourself. A one-year subscription is \$2.00; a three-year subscription is \$5.00; three one-year subscriptions are \$5.00.

Send to

Address

City Zone State

Send gift card
to read: From

Send to

Address

City Zone State

Send gift card
to read: From

Name of person
sending order

Address

City Zone State

☐ Please include, or advance, my own subscription

☐ \$..... enclosed

Mail to

THE LIGUORIAN - - - LIGUORI, MISSOURI

7-51
O'CONNELL, MRS H
5041 MINERVA AVE
ST LOUIS 13 MO

Motion Picture Guide

UNOBJECTIONABLE FOR GENERAL PATRONAGE

Reviewed This Issue

Cowboy and the Indians, The
Grand Canyon
Horsemen of the Sierras
Kid from Cleveland
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon
Task Force

Previously Reviewed

Abbott and Costello Meet the
Killer
Adventure in Baltimore
Air Hostess
All Over Town
Arson, Inc.
Battleground
Blazing Trail, The
Brand of Fear
Brinstone
Christopher Columbus
Come to the Stable
Down Memory Lane
Flaming Fury
Frontier Investigator
Girl in the Painting, The
Home in San Antonio
Illegal Entry
Indian Scout
In the Good Old Summer Time
It Happens Every Spring
Kater Lampe (German)
Laramie
Law of the Golden West
Law of the West
Look for the Silver Lining
Lost Boundaries
Lost Tribe, The
Ma and Pa Kettle
Make Believe Ballroom
Mr. Soft Touch
Mighty Joe Young
Mississippi Rhythm
Movie Crazy
Mutineers, The
Mysterious Desperado, The
Outlaw Country
Place of One's Own
Prince of the Plains
Professor, My Son (Italian)
Red Menace
Ride, Ryder, Ride
Riders of the Whistling Pines

Rim of the Canyon
Rustlers
Rusty Saves a Life
Sand
Shamrock Hill
Skyliner
Silver Butte
Singin' Spurs
Son of a Badman
South of Death Valley
South of Rio
Special Agent
Stagecoach Kid, The
Susanna Pass
That Midnight Kiss
Top O' the Morning
Trail of the Yukon
Trail's End
Trouble Makers
Tulsa
Weaker Sex, The
West of Eldorado
Window, The
Wyoming Bandit
You're My Everything
Yes Sir, That's My Baby

UNOBJECTIONABLE FOR ADULTS

Reviewed This Issue

Abandoned
Earth Cries Out (Italian)
Gal Who Took the West, The
House Across the Street
Lovable Cheat, The
Rossini (Italian)
Saints and Sinners
Under Capricorn

Previously Reviewed

Act of Violence
Any Number Can Play
Barkleys of Broadway, The
Big Steal, The
Black Shadows
Blind Goddess
Blue Lagoon
Broken Journey
Chicago Deadline
Daring Caballero
Devil's Henchman, The
Doctor and the Girl, The
Doolins of Oklahoma, The
Easy Living (formerly Interfer-
ence)

Everybody Does It
Fan, The
Father Was a Fullback
Fear No Evil (Italian)
Fighting O'Flynn, The
Follow Me Quietly
Great Sinner, The
Guaglio (Italian)
Hamlet
Hellfire
House of Strangers
It's a Great Feeling
Johnny Allegro
Johnny Stool Pigeon
Kazan
Knock On Any Door
Lady Gambles, The
Lucia di Lammermoor (Italian)
Madam Bovary
Massacre River
Man-Eater of Kumaon
Massacre River
Mr. Belvedere Goes to College
My Brother Jonathan
My Dream Is Yours
Night Unto Night
Obsession
Omoo-Omoo
Once More My Darling
Once Upon a Dream
One Last Fling
Parole, The
Piccadilly Incident (British)
Portrait of Jennie
Quiet One, The
Red, Hot and Blue
Red Light
Reign of Terror
Rimfire
Ringside
Roughshod
Savage Splendor
Scene of the Crime
Search for Danger
Secret of St. Ives, The
Slattery's Hurricane
Somewhere in Europe (Hungar-
ian)
Song of Surrender
Sorrowful Jones
Streets of San Francisco
Sword in the Desert
Take One False Step
Temptation Harbor
Woman Hater
Woman Trouble (Italian)